
INTRODUCTORY
SERMON,
ON
DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

INTRODUCTION



S. E. M. O. N.

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS

S E R M O N S

ON THE

Relative Duties.

PREACHED AT
QUEEN-STREET CHAPEL,
AND
ST. PAUL'S COVENT-GARDEN.

BY THE *K*
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Vicar of WARE in HERTFORDSHIRE.

L O N D O N :

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M DCC LXV.

1209/20



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
The COUNTESS of
NORTHINGTON.

MADAM,

THE following Sermons were
preached before, and are
therefore, with all due respect,
dedicated to your Ladyship : Dis-
courses on the *relative duties* could
not indeed be addressed with so
much propriety to any one, as to
her who is so eminently distin-
guish'd

guish'd for the constant and regular performance of them. The subjects are of great and universal concern : I flatter myself therefore, that the important nature of the plan will in a great measure palliate all defects in the execution of it.

In an age of luxury and dissipation, when family duties are so generally neglected, the *Characters* subjoined to each discourse may perhaps be thought merely ideal, and such as are rather to be wish'd for than found amongst us ; with regard to some of them I had notwithstanding the advantage of looking up to a *living example* :

DEDICATION.

v

example : those who are unacquainted with your character, and those only need be told, that the good *parent*, *wife*, and *mistress*, are but three several portraitures, drawn in different attitudes, of Lady NORTHINGTON: for the truth of this I appeal to one of the best and most equitable Judges in this kingdom: I believe there is not a person in it who will not in this, as in every other point, readily abide by *his* determination.

That Lord NORTHINGTON, yourself, and family, may long enjoy that domestic happiness which is the genuine fruit and
best

D E D I C A T I O N.

best reward of domestic virtue, in
uninterrupted health and prospe-
rity, is the sincere wish of,

M A D A M,

Your LADYSHIP's most devoted,

and obedient humble servant,

QUEEN-STREET, }
May 29. 1765. }

THO. FRANKLIN.

S E R M O N I.

O N DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

PROV. XV. Ver. 17.

*Better is a dinner of herbs where love
is than a stalled ox and hatred
therewith.*

AS Happiness is the end and de-SERM.
sign of our being, the land I.
flowing with milk and honey, ~~~~~
which all men are in search of, it is
doubtless our business to enquire which
is the best and plainest road, and that
will most infallibly conduct us to it; and
in this important concern we cannot be
too cautious, because when once we
B enter

INTRODUCTORY

SERM. enter into a wrong path, every step we

I. take plunges us still deeper into error.

~~~~~ So fatal is the influence of bad example, so stubborn are the prejudices contracted in our earlier years, that it is too often half the business of life to unlearn their foolish lessons, and shake off the burthen which they have imposed on us : the pomp and lustre of riches and grandeur so dazzle the young and unexperienced mind, that it is no wonder it associates with *them* the idea of happiness ; though, in reality, no two things are in their natures more distinct or more essentially different from each other, as would evidently appear to him who, but for a moment, would place before him the following necessary and indisputable truth.

IF the wise and good Creator designed that all men should be happy, (and to suppose otherwise were to impeach his goodness) we may rest assured he would  
not

# S E R M O N.

3

not have confined that bliss, which he SERM.  
graciously intended for all, within the I.  
reach only of a few; mere externals there-  
fore can never constitute true felicity.

WITHOUT subordination, without different degrees of rank and precedence, the world would be a scene of anarchy and confusion; some consequently must be richer, some more powerful, some wiser than the rest; but from hence to infer, that those also must be happier, is an idle and a groundless conclusion; a conclusion, which every hour's experience destroys, an argument, which even the weakest reasoner might confute.

IT is indeed with the minds as with the bodies of men; whatever is absolutely necessary to the health and tranquillity of either is equally attainable by all; but when needless delicacies are sought for to please the one, and

B 2

visionary



## INTRODUCTORY

SERM. visionary refinements to delight the

I. other, then imaginary wants grow up  
 ~~~~~ into real misfortunes, and the loss of  
 ideal happiness creates sensible and last-
 ing misery.

BETTER, says Solomon, *is a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith*; that is, it is better to be happy than to appear so. The maxim inculcated in my text is the observation of the wisest of the sons of men, not the declamatory satire of a discontented indigent philosopher, who (as philosophers indeed used) railed at those riches which he could not acquire, but the sober dispassionate reflection of a potent monarch, of one who had opportunity to favor, power to assist, and, above all, wisdom to direct him in his search after happiness: he was well acquainted with the temptations of ambition, and no stranger to those cares and disappointments,

pointments, which so constantly attend SERM.
its votaries : he knew too well of what I.
sorry stuff the idol was made ever to fall 
down and worship it ; he had tasted that
poison of hatred which *embitters* the
feast of life : he had been blest in that
love which *sweetens* and endears it. So-
lomon, we see, in the midst of affluence
and grandeur, even in the bosom of
plenty and prosperity, prefers the calm
undisturbed enjoyment of domestic bliss,
with peace and harmony, to the pomp
of majesty, and all the pleasures of a
crown, without them ; and the greatest
epicure must own, when he made choice
of love, he invited a nobler guest to
grace his table, than even that queen,
who came so far to visit him ; he chose
a guest, who, though he tarry but a
day, can give more real entertainment,
and more solid satisfaction, than all the
croud of idle visitants, who loiter round
the great, and swell the bubble of a
court.

BETTER

SERM.

I. *BETTER is a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox and hatred therewith;* or, in other words, it is better to have a moderate competency with the pleasures of mutual love, and an agreeable intercourse with those, whom we value and esteem, than vast accumulated wealth joined to profusion and extravagance, together with that hatred, strife, and envy, which so frequently accompany them. There is not perhaps a set of beings more truly unhappy than those we falsely term the great; whose pomp we see, but do not know their sorrows; so true is it, that a *man's riches do not consist in the abundance; not in the quantity, but in the quality of what he possesseth*: sensible was the reply of the philosopher to the reproach cast on his small cottage; small as it is, said he, would to heaven, I could fill it with real friends! The highest sensual gratifications (and so the voluptuous man himself

himself will own) quickly pall the ap-
petite, unless heightened and improved
by social pleasures; by that double en-
joyment which we reap from another's
participation of it; and hence it ariseth,
that all the restless sons of avarice and
ambition, all the most unwearied pur-
suers after power and fame, find in
their short moments of reflection a cruel
void aching in their hearts: even those
who pretend to hate mankind, and those
who shun it, would still be glad to fix
some friendships, to form some con-
nections, to have a haven of rest to re-
tire to, a home to shelter themselves in,
and a feast of love to partake of.

It is a certain sign of a vitiated
stomach, when nothing but a variety of
costly viands, with high and luxurious
provocatives, can raise the sickly appe-
tite; when we see men therefore run
abroad after every gaudy scene, and em-
brace every foolish public entertainment,
it

SERM. it is a shrewd sign they are not very

I. fond of home; if their *treasure* was
 there, *there would their hearts be* also.

WHEN the body languishes under any secret lurking distemper, it is always restless and uneasy; perpetually shifting its position, though every altered motion gives fresh pain and disquietude; and thus it is, I fear, with the mind also; which, once deprived of that ease and quiet, on which its health and happiness depend, is ever seeking after new objects to divert its anguish, and deceive it into a momentary and false tranquillity.

SINCE then, neither that virtue which bestows peace, nor that innocence which alone can preserve it, are in the gift of fortune, fame, or power; since they are not to be sought for in the noise and bustle of a venal world, but in our own breasts; since it is not the *stalled ox*, the
 pride

pride and lustre of life, which constitute true felicity, but the *dinner of herbs* where love is; since it is this which sheds comfort on the lowest station, and without which the highest must be miserable, how careful ought we to be in preserving, strengthening, and improving that love and union, that peace and quietness, on which our happiness does so immediately depend !

THAT God has implanted in every breast a principle of love and benevolence, is an indisputable truth, which calls for the highest sense of gratitude to our creator; and lest that principle should, like a drop of rain falling into the ocean, lose itself in a multiplicity of objects, God hath thought fit to direct it, as it were, into proper channels; to confine it by inseparable connections, by the ties of kindred, and the bonds of natural affection; from this fountain flow all those

C domestic

SERM. domestic sweets, which alleviate the

I. cares and enhance the blessings of life,
those social duties, those tender relations, which act a double part, and whilst they make us happy here in the discharge of them, recommend us at the same time to the Almighty, and secure our future and everlasting happiness.

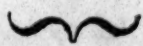
WHEN it depends intirely on ourselves with whom we will spend our days (a happiness which but very few can boast) we naturally attach ourselves to those, from whose imagined worth we have reason to expect the warmest returns ; but experience convinces us how frequent and how fatal are the errors of our choice : we see through a glass, which presents objects to us not only darkly but falsely. Some qualities dazzle by a specious lustre, others allure by a seeming solidity ; gravity passes on us for wisdom, and
vivacity

vivacity for wit; and we too often find, SERM.
that, instead of an amiable companion, I.
and a prudent counsellor, we have ~~~~~
linked ourselves to an idle jester, or a
conceal'd villain; here, indeed, self-
love commands and religion warrants a
retreat; if the friend, on whom we re-
lied, start aside, *like a broken bow*, we
are at liberty to leave him, and seek a
furer defence; but the case is far other-
wise, when we are tied down by con-
nections, bound by solemn obligations,
by nature and by religion, to duties we
cannot shake off or set light by.

THE fretfulness and severity of old
age would be a poor plea for the
omission of filial duty; nor can the
petulant frowardness or wanton folly
of children by any means excuse a
parent's negligence or contempt of
them: a sister's ignorance, her weakness,
even her crime must not utterly blot
out a brother's tenderness; nor a bro-
ther's

SERM. ther's cruelty destroy a sister's affection :

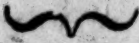
I. where ties are close and interests united,
 we must not suffer every trifle to un-
 loose them : where there is, or where
 there ought to be, much love, there
 must be much forgiveness also ; *a man's*
worst foes, where they are foes, *are*
those of his own household ; when that
 home, which should be our shelter from
 the injuries of a malicious world, and
 all those cruel slights we receive abroad,
 becomes itself loathsome and detestable,
 when the reed we had so long leant on,
 breaks and pierces our sides, the pain
 must needs be exquisite. In such cir-
 cumstances, it is not the stoic's apathy,
 nor all the heathen's boasted superiority
 over pain and disquietude, which can
 support us ; as men we must feel
 them, but as christians we must bear
 them with patience and resignation,
 and happy is it for us that christianity,
 which teaches us to bear, can teach us
 also to prevent these evils ; it will teach
 us,

us, if we attend to its dictates, a kind SERM.
and friendly behaviour, which alone can I.
keep alive and maintain that mutual 
tendernefs and affection, which consti-
tute our domestic felicity.

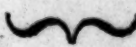
To a mind that has the least tincture of humanity, the least feeling for the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, there cannot be a spectacle more shocking and disagreeable, than to see those, whose blood, fame, fortunes, and interests are united, and whose good offices should be mutual, torn to pieces by jealousies, hatred and division; to see them harassing and oppressing, who should be employed in serving and obliging each other; such scenes make us ashamed of our nature, and out of love with our very being; they give us the idea of a rude and uninformed world, the anti-ent chaos of matter, where all the elements were met together, and nothing reigned but discord, darkness, and confusion.

ON

SERM.

I.  ON the other hand, a well-regulated and happy family, where order and harmony are preserved, where peace, tenderness, love and affection reign, untainted with discord, unembittered by strife or animosities, where there is a constant, unwearied endeavour to serve and oblige each other; such a family is doubtless a sight well-pleasing in the eyes of that God, who formed the members of it: it is an emblem (though an imperfect one) of the whole frame of nature, the glorious fabric of the universe, built by the divine architect, whose wisdom ordained its symmetry and proportions, where each part is perfect in itself, and contributes at the same time to the beauty, magnificence, and duration of the whole.

LET us then endeavour to cultivate in our minds a settled good will, an habitual benevolence, without which we shall

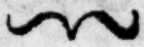
shall always fall short of our duty, both SERM.
towards God, and towards our neigh- I.
bour: and here let me observe to you, 
that love to man, no more than love to
God, can ever consist in the observance
of mere external forms; a compliance
with positive institutions, and decent
ceremonies, shew a respect and defe-
rence highly commendable in the one;
the practice of politeness and good breed-
ing signify a readiness to serve and
oblige in the other: but the professions
of the tongue are as a *tinkling cymbal*,
unless they flow from the dictates of an
honest and an upright heart; we must
exert our benevolence, we must ma-
nifest the love of our neighbour, by
the same means as the supreme Being
makes known his love to us, by conti-
nued acts of kindness and beneficence.

WE must learn therefore (if we ex-
pect to live peaceably) to bear with the
infirmities, to pardon the errors, to give
way

SERM. way to the dispositions of those with

I. whom it is our lot to be any ways connected. As depraved as human nature is, there are few tempers so hard, but a perpetual endeavour to please, will soften into love and gratitude ; we must not always expect to meet with all we could wish for in our companions, because the sweetest minds may be soured by accident or misfortune, the chearfullest face saddened by pain or sickness ; and if we resolve to be in good humour ourselves, no longer than whilst all round about us continue so, our social happiness will very seldom, I fear, be of any long duration.

LET us remember then, that as afflictions do not, so neither do pleasures, spring out of the dust : every relative and social duty is founded on mutual obligations ; where the seeds of love and friendship are not sown, or where what springs up from them is not cultivated
and

and improved, it will be but *as the grass* SERM.
growing on the house-top, wherewith, as I.
 the glorious language of the psalmist 
 expresseth it, *the mower filleth not his*
hand, neither he that bindeth the sheaves
his bosom.

A KIND and tender behaviour, therefore, to those with whom we live, in whatever situation of life we are, is what I would recommend and enforce as a branch, and no inconsiderable one, of Christian duty; a duty indeed, which (like the rest of those enjoined us in the holy gospel) doth most amply reward itself. Our Saviour came down from heaven to *bring peace upon earth* and *good-will towards men*; that peace and good-will which makes the happiness of the whole and of every individual. The result of all then that hath been here advanced is this, that, if we hope to be happy in our several stations and professions, in all the various circum-

D stances

SERM.

I.

stances of this life, we must be humane, charitable, and benevolent; whatever makes us lovely will make us beloved, and whatever tends to the peace and felicity of our fellow-creatures must render us amiable in the sight of our Creator: it is this alone which can make the humblest lot an object of envy and admiration, the *dinner of herbs* a feast for an epicure.

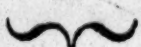
TO CONCLUDE—

The visible connection between our duty and our happiness is too apparent to be further insisted on; in all our private concerns, all those relations and connections which we bear to one another, that love and affection, which I have now endeavoured to recommend, is the fountain and foundation of all our social pleasures; and as our domestic bliss is a point in which we are every one of us deeply and intimately concerned, our time, I think, cannot be better

better employed than in the due re-
flection on those means, which may
most effectually promote it : I must beg
you therefore to consider what hath now
been offered as preparatory to some se-
lect discourses, wherein I propose to ex-
plain and illustrate the relative duties ;
that is to say, the duties of child and
parent, servant and master, wife and
husband : on the due performance of
these mutual and indispenfible obliga-
tions the happiness of man doth, I ap-
prehend, in a great measure depend ;
and according to the manner in which
we discharge these important offices,
we shall be rewarded or punished both
here and hereafter.

SERM.

I.



THE

THE
D U T Y
OF
CHILDREN
TO
P A R E N T S.



S E R M O N II.

DUTY TO PARENTS.

EPHES. vi. Ver. 2, 3.

*Honour thy father and thy mother, that
it may be well with thee, and thou
mayest live long on the earth.*

HAVING endeavoured, in a pre-SERM.
vious discourse, to recommend II.
to you the necessity and advan-
tages of mutual love and harmony, as
the only means of insuring domestic
peace and happiness, I shall proceed,
in pursuance of what I there proposed,
briefly to explain the nature of those
strong ties and connections by which
men

SERM. men in this life are bound to each other;

II. and to illustrate the several important duties arising from them: in the due discharge of which both our temporal and eternal welfare are so nearly and intimately concerned. I shall therefore beg your serious attention to some reflections on what we usually term the *Relative Duties*, which are for the most part ranked under the six following heads, namely,

The Duty of Children to Parents,
And of
Parents to Children.

The Duty of Servants to Masters,
And of
Masters to Servants.

The Duty of Wives to Husbands :
And of
Husbands to Wives.

On each of which I shall give you
a separate discourse.

I shall

I SHALL begin therefore with the SERM.
duty expressed in the words of my text, II.

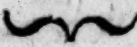
Of CHILDREN to PARENTS.

*Honour thy father and thy mother, that
it may be well with thee, and thou mayest
live long on the earth.*

As this duty is the first we are capable of practising, and which as soon as we have the least dawn of reason we are called upon to perform, it is very fitly placed at the head of the second table in the decalogue, and deserves of all social duties first and principally to be considered; because on this, as I shall in the subsequent discourse endeavour fully to prove, the others do immediately and necessarily depend.

ALL those philosophers who have most curiously explored the goodness of the Almighty in the animal creation, have concurred in observing that the
E instinctive

SERM. instinctive tenderness of creatures towards

II.  their young is a worthy example for the best of parents, and a severe, though silent, reproach of the bad amongst us; but strong as this natural affection is in every class of irrational beings, it remains no longer than whilst it is absolutely necessary to the propagation and support of the species: the connection on each side is soon lost, another love succeeds, another race rises up to enjoy it; but man is graciously distinguished by his Maker, in this, as in every other particular, and maintains his sovereignty over the creation: he is endued with faculties to be sensible of, and with power to repay the benefit; the care and tenderness of the parent, the love and gratitude of the child, are constant and permanent, and the mutual exchange of affection carried on from the earliest dawn of life even to the latest period of it.

IN

IN man, indeed, as in every other SERM.
creature, the love implanted in the II.
breast of the parent towards the off-
spring is much more intense than that
implanted in the child towards its pa-
rent. And herein the providence of
God is immediately visible, and the
reason sufficiently obvious; the child,
we know, is helpless and destitute, and
without that care and tenderness must
inevitably perish; whereas the parent
may subsist (though not with an equal
share of comfort and satisfaction) with-
out the return of filial duty.

BUT this, as well as every other, rea-
son, would be a poor plea for the omission,
or rather perhaps to every grateful and
ingenuous mind, would be a stronger in-
ducement to the performance of it.

But that no plea or excuse whatever
can indeed be admitted will be suffi-
ciently evident, when we come to con-

SERM. sider in the subsequent discourse, the

II. various parts of this duty, together
with our necessary and indispensable obligations to the practice of it.

Honour thy father and mother, says the apostle, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

By *honour*, in the more strict and confined sense of the word, is understood no more than that deference and respect which is due from inferior to superior, varying according to the various ties and relations, the several circumstances and conditions of human life; exclusive of parental authority, it is the accustomed tribute of youth to age and experience, in grateful return for the benefits of its advice, and the influence of its example; and this doubtless is a part, and no inconsiderable one, of the duty here enjoined.

THE

THE highest deference, respect, and SERM. submission, should be shewn to parents, II. because they are, next to God, the most proper objects of them. *Cursed be he, says the law of Moses, that setteth light by his father or mother:* where no respect is paid to the person we can hardly expect obedience to his commands, and we have seldom any great love or esteem for those whom we treat with levity and contempt.

When we consider that the pains and afflictions which attend the latter part of our lives are so many and so great, the advantages and privileges of age so few and inconsiderable, we cannot without the utmost inhumanity abridge it of the least of them: And yet this branch of filial duty is very often shaken off, and very frequently neglected, and particularly by those who are a little advanced in life, who as soon as they begin to receive respect and deference themselves,

SERM. selves, forget to pay it where it is due,

II. and even whilst they enjoy the good effects of parental instruction, are regardless of those to whom they are originally indebted for it.

THE greater the obligations are which we have at any time laid on others, the better treatment do we of course expect in return, and with the greater degree of warmth do we resent any injury or contempt from them; the slightest wound gives the most exquisite pain, when inflicted by the hand we love. What then must the parent feel, who, instead of reciprocal tenderness and affection, instead of that submissive deference, which he has a right to expect, meets with surliness and pride, with a contemptuous disregard of him, from a thankless child? Even expressions of civility, even that complaisance and good-breeding, which to others may appear amiable, in his eyes will seem cold

cold and disrespectful. How can we SERM.
persuade ourselves to fill that heart with II.
anguish and disquietude, which is so
solicitous for our welfare; or give a
moment's uneasiness to those who spend
their lives in providing for our wants,
defending us from danger, and promot-
ing our joy and happiness!

BUT besides this deference and respect, these outward marks of esteem, there is something more required: the sincerest testimony of filial affection, (and which must doubtless be included in the precept of my text) is obedience. To *honour our parents* is to obey them, to submit implicitly to their orders, and dutifully to perform whatever is enjoined by them.

AND here (as in almost every duty) our Saviour himself hath condescended to be a guide and example to us. The sons of men need not err, for the son
of

SERM. of God hath pointed out to them the

II.  measure of their obedience: he submitted to the commands of his Almighty Father, and obeyed them chearfully; without reproach, murmur, or reluctance; he endured the most painful sufferings, with patience and content; even in the hour of death, he petitions with humility, but submits with resignation; *Father, if it please thee, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.*

WHERE there is absolute and total dependance on one side, there should be total and absolute submission on the other; here then a title to obedience is already established, and it is as vain as it is ungrateful to dispute it: resistance can be of no effect, there is therefore in the rebellion of children, as much folly, as wickedness.

BUT moreover that which is the indispensable duty of children, is their
real

real and truest interest also; it is the SERM.
peculiar and distinguishing advantage of II.
parental power, that the interest of him
who lays the command, and of him who
performs it, is for the most part plainly,
and indisputably, the same. The ma-
gistrate may, and perhaps frequently
doth, compel his inferior to actions
highly disgustful, and sometimes ex-
tremely pernicious to him, because he
has a secret view to his own advance-
ment; the general may force his soldiers
to rush on danger and death to promote
his glory; and the despotic tyrant may
sacrifice millions of his subjects to his
own pride and ambition: But the father
has no private interest to promote in op-
position to his children, no ambition but
to make them amiable, no views but to
make them happy; here then there can
be no doubt or jealousy, the relation they
stand in, exempts them from the least
suspicion of fraud or treachery; and, in
a world where there is scarce any
F thing

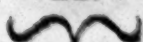
SERM. thing else, how inestimable is such
II. sincerity!



So agreeable to the law of nature and reason is this important duty, as to be held even by the un-enlightened heathens in the highest esteem and veneration: "he that is undutiful to his
" parents, (says the Athenian law,) shall
" be incapable of holding any office;" amongst the Romans also, if a father came to want, and the son, if able, did not relieve him, he was sentenced by the laws against ingratitude, to be the father's slave for life; the wise, and pious rulers in those times, were doubtless of opinion, that no obligations could influence, no ties could bind the man who had broken through the bonds of nature; that the love of his country could never reside in *that* breast which was void of filial affection; that where the father's authority was slighted, the magistrate's would be but ill submitted to; and that *he* in short
must

must be very unfit to *rule*, who had never learn'd to *obey*. SERM.

II.



But further, —

By *honouring* our parents, is undoubtedly meant the giving them all the assistance, support, and defence, which they may at any time stand in need of.

SUCH are the vicissitudes of human life, that it is no strange or uncommon circumstance, to see penury or distress usurp the seats of joy and plenty; to see those who had flourished in the earlier part of life in affluence and prosperity, reduced at the close of it to want and misery, oblig'd to struggle with the world at an age when they are most unfit to encounter it, and instead of resting in peace after a troublesome journey, compelled to bear the heat and burthen of the day. Here then filial duty hath the noblest opportunity of exerting its gratitude: all that a child can do, is no more than

SERM. what he is strictly bound to do, and no

II. danger is so great, but in such a case
 he should readily go through it; no toil
 so severe, but he should most willingly
 bear it.

A numerous family has often sunk those, who, without it, might have lived in the utmost splendor; to the weight of its branches the tree may owe its decay: here the obligation receives new force; to relieve the wants we ourselves have caused, is but common justice; to heal the wounds which our own hands have made, is but common humanity.

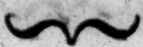
AGE, we know, has always a melancholy attendance. Infirmities vex, diseases torment, and death affrights it; health scarce enlivens, sickness totally depresses it; it calls for the compassion therefore and assistance of all; from man to man, it implores them as favors; from the parent to his children it demands them as a debt; the greatest indeed which
 we

we can contract, and the first which we SERM.
are bound to discharge : *My son*, says the II.
wise man, *help thy father in his age, and*
grieve him not as long as he liveth, and if his
understanding fail, have patience with him,
and despise him not when thou art in thy
full strength ; for the relieving of thy
father shall not be forgotten, it shall be
added to build thee up, in the day of af-
liction it shall be remembered. But——

ANOTHER method of *honouring* our parents is, to have such a regard to our own character and reputation in the world, as never, if possible, to be guilty of any action which may reflect shame or disgrace upon them.

THE consequences of vice are seldom indeed confined to the person of the offender, they reach much further, and affect others as well as ourselves. The malice and ill-nature of mankind is always ready enough to attribute the follies

SERM. follies of children to the negligence, or

II.  example of their parents. What shall we say then to those, who instead of imparting joy and satisfaction to the virtuous parent, repay their cares and tenderness with ignominy and disgrace; who, instead of adding dignity to their age, and weight to their authority, by a licentious and abandon'd life, load their hearts with sorrow, increase the burthen of their years, and *bring their grey hairs in sorrow to the grave?*

To *honour* our parents then is, *first*, to shew respect and deference to them in all our words and actions: *secondly*, readily and implicitly to hearken to their precepts, and obey their commands: and *lastly*, to support, defend, and relieve them: to support those who have defended us, to relieve those who have relieved us. *Honour thy father with thy whole heart*, says the son of Sirach, and forget not the sorrows of thy mother; remember
that

that thou wast begot of them, and how SERM.
canst thou recompence them the things which II.
they have done for thee? }

THE obligation indeed is not easily recompenced, because it is not easily known; true generosity always enhances the value of the gift by concealment: innumerable instances of paternal tenderness pass over, and are forgotten, and thousands are never seen.

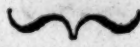
The father, says the wise man, waketh for the daughter when no man knoweth, and the care for her taketh away sleep; to be supported when we are unable to support ourselves, to be defended from the world at a time when we have not power to contend with it, to receive not only present maintenance, but to have our future joy and happiness provided for, are surely benefits which call for the highest and sincerest acknowledgments: but the true value of this blessing like
most

SERM. most others is perhaps scarce ever perceived till it is lost; whilst we revel at the feast we forget the master of it, and seldom know the true merit of paternal affection, till we feel the want of it.

II.

Look round upon the ignorant and illiterate, the poor and destitute, the vicious and abandoned part of mankind, enquire into the causes of this depravity, the source of their indigence, the reasons of their ignorance, and you will most generally find that these unhappy wretches are orphans; such as had no parents to instruct or provide for them, a wandering flock who had no guide to direct them, *no shepherd to feed them in green pastures, or lead them beside the waters of comfort.*

LET the reflection on their unhappy circumstances sink deep into the souls of those who have escaped them; let us view the storm at a distance, and bless the pilot who saved us from it, let those
who

have enjoyed, who have been blest with SERM.
the life of their parents, be truly thank- II.
ful for the benefit, and by repaying, 
shew that they deserve it. But there is
also another inducement to the practice
of this virtue, which may possibly have
some influence upon us, and that is, the
hope of ourselves receiving the benefit of
it. We must pay that duty as children,
which as parents, we may hereafter ex-
pect to be paid to us.

*By the same that a man sinneth, says the
scripture, by the same also shall he be pu-
nished:* the undutiful child will most
probably be an unhappy father, the poi-
soned cup shall return to his own lips,
he shall meet with that disobedience
from his children which he had himself
been guilty of, and shall want that duty
and respect which he refused to pay.

THE last incitement to the practice
of this duty which I shall now mention

SERM. is, that most persuasive one subjoined

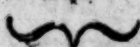
II. in the text: *Honour thy father and mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*

It is observable, that the command to *honour* our parents is, as St. Paul remarked, *the first commandment with promise*: Thus doth religion, which in the language of holy writ, is always stiled *wisdom*, provide for those who *walk in her ways*; *length of days is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honours*. *Honour thy father, and thy mother, that thou mayest live long on the earth*: that is, if by an obedient and dutiful behaviour to thy parents, thou dost prolong their life, and contribute to their health and happiness, thou shalt thyself be rewarded with the same blessings. God we see, doth so peculiarly delight in the execution of this duty, that he hath promised even to suspend, for a time, the laws of nature in
favour

favour of those who comply with it; as SERM.
if the Divine Being were himself unwill- II.
ling to interrupt us in the performance
of an office so grateful to him.

If, then, we expect to live a long and happy life, let us be careful, as many of us as are able, to deserve it. Not all, indeed, have it in their power. Death sometimes cancels the debt, before those who have contracted can possibly discharge it; in the first dawn of life, in that part of our existence when we first receive the benefit we are not sufficiently sensible of it; and when we become so, it frequently happens, that it is too late to shew our acknowledgments of it. As soon as men, therefore, arrive at an age, when they can thoroughly feel the good effects of their parents care; and can reflect, as they ought, on all their past acts of goodness and tenderness towards them, then, and then alone, they have it in their power to make some return for it. It is their duty, then, to lay

SERM. hold on the glorious opportunity. Few

II.  parents live long enough to receive from their children that rational and sincere obedience which they have merited from them. They sow early, and reap late; and therefore, doubtless, more abundant should be the harvest.

To conclude, therefore, with a short character of

A GOOD SON.

THE *good* and dutiful *Son*, then, is one who *honoureth* his parents, by paying them the utmost deference and respect; by a reverential awe and veneration for them; a filial affection for their persons, and a tender regard for their safety and preservation; a constant and chearful attendance to their advice, and a ready and implicit obedience to their commands. As he becometh every day more sensible of his obligations to them, he grows every day more willing and more solicitous to re-
pay

pay them. He employs his youth to SERM.
support their age; his abundance to re- II.
lieve their wants; his knowledge and 
strength, to supply their infirmities and
decay. He is more careful of his cha-
racter and reputation in the world, be-
cause theirs depends upon it. Ever
anxious for their welfare, and attentive
to their happiness, he endeavours, by
every method in his power, to prolong
their days, that his *own* may be *long in*
the land. He rests assured, that God
will not only bless obedient children
here, but will reward them with the
blessing of heaven, where it shall be
well with him for ever; where we shall
all join, son and father, daughter and
mother, wife and husband, servant and
master; all the relations and connections
of this life, to honor one great Parent,
Protector, Lord, and Master of us all:

To whom, &c.

T H E

THEORY OF THE EARTH

The theory of the earth is a branch of geology which deals with the origin and development of the earth and its various parts. It is a science which seeks to explain the causes of the various geological phenomena which we observe in nature. The theory of the earth is a very old science, and it has been the subject of much speculation and controversy. In the early days of the world, men believed that the earth was created by the gods, and that it was the work of the gods to create the various parts of the earth. But as time went on, men began to see that the earth was not created by the gods, but that it was the work of natural forces. They began to see that the earth was a living organism, and that it was the work of the earth to create the various parts of the earth. This was the beginning of the theory of the earth. The theory of the earth is a very important science, and it is one of the most interesting and useful of the sciences. It is a science which has many practical applications, and it is one of the sciences which has made the greatest progress in the last few centuries. The theory of the earth is a science which is still in its infancy, and it is one of the sciences which has the most to learn from the other sciences. It is a science which is still in its infancy, and it is one of the sciences which has the most to learn from the other sciences.

THE
D U T Y
OF
P A R E N T S
TO
C H I L D R E N.



S E R M O N III.

D U T Y TO C H I L D R E N.

E P H E S. vi. 4.

*Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath,
but bring them up in the nurture and
admonition of the Lord.*

AS all relations are founded on mutual and reciprocal dependencies, and we can have no right to demand where we have never bestowed any thing, it must necessarily follow, that the love, respect, and obedience, which are required of children, are founded on those benefits which they have from time to time received at the hands of their parents, who are thus re-warded

SERM. III.

SERM. warded for their care and tendernefs.

III. As children, therefore, are bound to serve and reverence their parents, parents are also on their part, equally obliged to support and provide for their children; not *to provoke them to wrath* and disobedience, and then reproach them for it, but the more effectually to secure to themselves honor and respect; to educate them in such a manner, as to make them acquainted with every part of filial duty; to *bring them up* soberly, virtuously, and religiously; or as the apostle expresses it, *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

THOUGH the affection of the parent towards the child is, as I observed to you in my last discourse, much stronger and more intense, than that of the child towards the parent, and consequently the breach of duty on one part, by no means so frequent as on the other; such, notwithstanding, is the weakness and depravity

depravity of human nature, that children may, as St. Paul hath remarked, *be provoked, and justly provoked to wrath,* by the faults and follies of their parents, as will more evidently appear, when we come to consider the many errors, weaknesses, and imperfections which we are all liable to, and to point out the principal sources of mutual contempt, hatred, and animosity which make so many families unhappy.

SERM.
III.
~~~~~

CHILDREN may be *provoked to wrath* by the churlishness and inhumanity of their parents; by their weakness and indulgence; by their partiality; their injustice, or their impiety. Permit me to make a few short reflections on every one of them.

AND first then, Children may be *provoked to wrath*, by the churlishness and inhumanity of their parents.



SERM.

III.

It is not in the least to be wondered at, that men of morose and cruel dispositions should *provoke their children to wrath*, by harsh and severe treatment of them: their own home, is perhaps, the only place where they can command without opposition, and tyrannize with impunity; as cowardice and cruelty are inseparable, they will most probably exert their authority where it cannot be disputed, and insult where they cannot be resisted. Parents are every day found amongst us, who shew their power only by the abuse of it; who treat their children as slaves; who, yielding to every impulse of passion and resentment, always rebuke with asperity, and chastise with rigor: but surely such savages are a disgrace to human nature: Youth hath a thousand pleas to urge in its favour which the dearest ear must listen to: ignorance hath always a claim to pity; and innocence a title to protection. There are very few faults indeed in children

children which are not pardonable ; and SERM.  
half their errors should only be attri- III.  
buted to inexperience and inadvertency. ~~~~~

Let the severe parent reflect, that if he *provokes his children to wrath*, he will be himself, in all probability, the greatest sufferer by it ; that distance and reservedness must naturally produce a servile dread and diffidence ; whilst on the contrary, an open and ingenuous confidence on one side, would as naturally beget esteem and regard on the other ; let him reflect, that though he may be obeyed, he cannot be loved ; that the blow will be felt, though it is not returned ; and, that those, who cannot retaliate, will, notwithstanding, resent the injury. Above all, let the severe parent remember, that *he also hath a Father in heaven*, to whom he looks up for love, tenderness, and affection, for pardon, indulgence, and reward ; if he should exercise his parental authority in like manner, and rule over his children



SERM. dren with *a rod of iron*, if he should be

III. *extreme to mark what is done amiss, who*  
*might abide it ?*

BUT, secondly, children may be *provoked to wrath* by the contrary extreme of weakness and indulgence.

A MORE dangerous, and certainly a much more frequent error in parents, is an unrestrained and excessive fondness; and this, however ill calculated it may seem for such a purpose, may, in the end, as justly and as inevitably *provoke children to wrath* as the opposite extreme of churlishness and severity; the various passions and affections of human nature begin very early to exert and display themselves, and if they are not properly restrained and directed, will of necessity have a fatal and unconquerable influence over the whole tenor of our lives; if we give up the reins to appetite, at an age, when reason is too weak to guide them

them, and suffer the will to rule with SERM. despotic sway, uncontroul'd by judgment, and unaw'd by parental authority, every vice will gain daily strength by habit, and every propensity to evil take such deep root in the soul, as never to be extirpated; if the child is never corrected, it is most probable that the man will never be virtuous; and if the child is always complied with, the man will be always unhappy. How often indeed do children live to condemn that fondness, which was the source of their guilt; and to curse that indulgence which was the foundation of their misery!

BUT there is another method of *provoking children to wrath*; where the resentment on one side is highly warrantable, and the injury on the other to the last degree inexcusable; and that is, the partial affection of a parent for one child, in preference to others, equally deserving



SERM. ing of it ; this is acting in direct oppo-

III. fittion, both to the will and to the conduct of our Almighty Father, who, in his dispensations towards man, teacheth us another and a better lesson : the children of nature all divide his tenderness, all share his equal love, without partiality, prejudice, or distinction : we should follow his steps, and imitate his justice. Nothing but a superior share of duty and obedience, can lay claim to superior favour and indulgence : no external beauty of form, however striking ; no natural accomplishments, however excellent ; no pre-eminence of genius, talents and abilities, however brilliant and engaging ; should have such weight in the scale of parental love, as to destroy that equal ballance which should be ever held with a steady and unshaken hand. When this is once lost, the foundations of domestic happiness are undermined ; strife, division and animosity usurp the seats of harmony and peace ;

peace; and where jealousy and hatred SERM.  
are thus early sown, they generally shoot III.  
up into a rank and fruitful harvest of  
guilt and misery. When children find  
it impossible to please, they will natu-  
rally lose all desire of pleasing; where  
they are neglected, they will neglect;  
and where they are injured, they will  
resent. These, and a thousand other  
ill consequences, which it is unnecessary  
to enumerate, will inevitably flow from  
the partial distribution of parental ten-  
derness: and yet there is scarce a large  
and numerous family to be met with,  
where this evil is not in some measure  
seen, felt, and lamented.

THERE are, we must acknowledge,  
strange weaknesses, prejudices and pre-  
possessions in human nature, not easily  
to be accounted for, which act, no doubt,  
as forcibly on parents as on other men;  
but when we are attacked by them, we  
must call in reason and religion to our

I

aid



SERM. aid, to combat these prejudices, to  
 III. counteract and subdue these weaknesses  
 and prepossessions: above all, we must  
 remember to place ourselves in the situation of those who are to suffer by them; to observe the golden rule, the great criterion of justice, and *do as we would be done unto.*

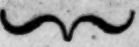
But —

There is another method, and which is too often practised by angry and inexorable parents, of *provoking children to wrath*, by unjustly defrauding them of their patrimony, without just cause. *If any provide not for his own, says the apostle, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel:* he must, indeed, be strictly and literally worse, more destitute of feeling and humanity, than the most savage and illiterate barbarians, amongst whom, strangers as they are to God and religion, the crime of deserting  
 and

and defrauding their offspring, is yet **SERM.**  
unknown. Children have a clear and **III.**  
indisputable right, from the great char-  
ter of nature, to the possessions of their  
parents; and unless that right is forfeited by some flagrant enormity, it cannot, with any degree of equity, be wrested from them: the laws of men, in this case, coincide and co-operate with the laws of God; and the claim of inheritance, in all civilized nations, is universally allowed and consented to, unless the contrary is peculiarly specified: those offences, therefore, should be of a very heinous nature, and accompanied with most aggravating circumstances, which can excuse a parent in bereaving his children of their patrimony: no venial inadvertency arising from inexperience, no imprudent sallies of unguarded youth, no unpremeditated acts of casual disobedience can palliate such injustice: for the most part, indeed, scarce any other cause can be assign'd for the commission



SERM. of this crime, but whim, caprice, or re-

III.  sentment : some there are who screen their guilt beneath the veil of piety, and cloath their vice in the habit of a virtue : but this is a poor and wretched subterfuge ; the mean evasion of cruelty and pride. The man, who deprives his children of their inheritance, and beggars his posterity, to sooth his vanity by ill-placed beneficence, though he may be canonized as a saint upon earth, will never be enrolled among the blessed in heaven. It is, upon the whole, an act of injustice which, however the offender may reconcile to himself by specious arguments, however by delusive reasons he may persuade the world to pass over or approve, his conscience will most probably reproach him for in this world, and his Creator punish in that which is to come.

THERE is, moreover, another branch of parental duty, the omission of which  
must

must *provoke children to wrath*; and that SERM.  
is, not only to bequeath to them their III.  
due patrimony, not only to provide for  
their future ease and happiness, but to  
promote by every method in their power,  
their present and immediate welfare : to  
administer to their necessities, and relieve  
their distress, to double every comfort,  
and lessen every calamity. The inheri-  
tance, which we leave our children, is  
no more than a debt which we owe to  
nature, and which justice demands of  
us : there is very little merit in parting  
with that which we can no longer re-  
tain : posthumous charity and generosi-  
ty, therefore of this, as of every other  
kind, is of small value or esteem. It  
often happens, that parents bequeath  
large estates, after their deaths, to chil-  
dren, whom they had kept in the utmost  
penury all their lives, and with-hold every  
thing from their family, till the hand of  
God wrests it from them : and what is  
generally the consequence of this ? the  
children



SERM. children are *provoked*, and justly *provoked*,

III. *to wrath*: the omission of duty on one part produces a neglect of it on the other; the bonds of mutual affection are gradually loosened and unwoven: to the warmth of love and tenderness, succeed coldness and indifference; those, who stand in need of support and assistance, and at the same time think they have a right to it, will be greatly hurt and disappointed, when it is unkindly with-held from them: instead of praying for the continuance of their parents life, they are tempted, but too often, to look forwards with secret satisfaction, towards the dissolution of it: and where indeed, there is penury, distress and resentment on one side, with affluence, avarice and inhumanity on the other, all the aid, which filial affection, morality and religion can afford, will sometimes prove ineffectual. If parents, therefore, hope for love, tenderness, and obedience from their children, they must,

as

as long as they live, in proportion to SERM.  
III.  
their circumstances and abilities, assist, support, and relieve them: we must love, in short, if we expect to be loved; we must give pleasure and satisfaction, if we expect to receive them; we must look up, in this, as in every other point of duty to the great standard of perfection, the tender, affectionate, universal Parent, the Creator and Father of mankind; *He* deals forth his bounties to all his children, with a liberal and impartial hand; directs them by his council, guards them by his providence, and supports them by his power; guides, instructs, and assists them here, and encourages them in the practice of duty and obedience, by the unalienable reversion of a noble inheritance hereafter.

But lastly: —

Parents may *provoke their children to wrath*, by their own wicked and licentious lives: not only by a neglect  
and



SERM. and disregard of *them*, but by the little

III. attention which they pay to *themselves*,  
and to their own character and reputation in the world. As parents frequently suffer for the follies of their children, so may children also suffer for the follies of their parents : it becometh all men to act with prudence and discretion ; to behave soberly and religiously, and to abstain from every evil word and work ; but, it is peculiarly incumbent on every father and mother, to keep a *conscience void of offence* ; to put a bridle on their lips, and place a guard over their hearts : the solemn relation which they have entered into, the important office which they are bound to perform, demand a more than ordinary care of their conduct in every particular. The minds of children are so susceptible of every impression ; so intirely guided by the direction, and influenced by the example of those who are immediately connected with them, that no caution can be too great,

no

no restraint too rigid and severe, with re- SERM.  
gard to every thing done and said within III.  
their presence, or within the sphere of ~~~~~  
their knowledge and comprehension.  
There is a reverence due to youth, as well  
as age: not an action should be committed  
before children, which hath the least  
tendency towards sin; not a word should  
escape our lips, that might taint the  
purity of unfulfilled innocence. How  
much, then, has the guilty parent to  
answer for, who, instead of setting a  
fair example to his children, and directing  
them in the paths of truth and  
happiness, misleads their unwary footsteps  
into the paths of sin and sorrow;  
who debauches those morals, which he  
ought to improve, and subjects those to  
the divine wrath, whom it is his indispensable  
duty to shelter from it!

THOUGH many other causes, arising  
from particular incidents in life, or from

K

the



SERM. the different tempers and dispositions of  
 III. men, may occasionally conspire to disturb  
 the peace of families, by *provoking children to wrath*, those which I have already mentioned, will generally be found the most prevalent: the best method, to guard against such weaknesses, and to prevent the ill consequences of them is, probably, that rule of conduct, which the apostle hath prescribed in the latter part of my text, admonishing parents, to *bring up their children in the nurture of the Lord*.

ST. Paul, who well knew how much depends on a virtuous and religious education, recommends it as the great and leading duty, including, as it were, and comprehending every other: he indeed, who regularly and conscientiously performs this, will not often be found deficient in any of the rest: it is scarce probable, that he who knows and teaches the principles of christianity, should him-  
 self

self act so directly in opposition to them, SERM.  
as to *provoke his children to wrath*, by III.  
any of those errors which I have above  
enumerated. It is not in the power of  
every man to provide for his children,  
with regard to the good things of this  
life, in the manner he could wish, or  
they, perhaps deserve; his own circum-  
stances may be too narrow to make  
theirs easy; his own interest, merit, or  
abilities too small and inconsiderable, to  
recommend them to powerful favour  
and protection; but, it is in every man's  
power to *bring up his children in the fear  
of the Lord*, to form their minds to the  
practice of virtue, and instil into them,  
as early as possible, the principles of re-  
ligion and morality.

THIS is a duty which, I fear, is too  
often neglected amongst us. The know-  
ledge of languages, of arts and sciences,  
is universally taught and inculcated



SERM. with the utmost pains and assiduity;

III. whilst the noblest science of all, that of  
 ~~~~~ Morality, the best and most useful knowledge, the knowledge of ourselves, is seldom enquired into. Care is taken to fill the garden with every flower that can beautify or adorn, but scarce one useful fruit, or salutary herb, is planted in it: Children, in short, are taught every language, but the language of the heart; instructed in every religion, but the religion of Christ; and acquainted with every book, but the holy scriptures.

PIETY strengthens the bonds of filial, as well as of every other duty: those children, therefore, will always be the most obedient, tender and affectionate, who act from conscientious and religious principles. Those, who have been *brought up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord*, will most probably repay their parents care and attention, by
 love

love and gratitude towards them : it is SERM.
therefore the father's highest interest, as III.
well as his indispensable duty, to in-
struct his children in religion ; to ac-
quaint them with the ways of God, to
explain the doctrine of Christ, and the
terms of salvation : as all the pains he
takes in this task, will be amply recom-
pensed ; and the gift, which he bestows,
be *returned fourfold into his own bosom.*

TO CONCLUDE, therefore, with the
character of

A GOOD FATHER.

The *good Father* is ever humane, ten-
der and affectionate to his children ; he
treats them, therefore, with lenity, and
kindness, ; corrects with prudence, re-
bukes with temper, and chastises with
reluctance : he never suffers his indul-
gence to degenerate into weakness, or
his

SERM. his affection to be biassed by par-

III. tiality: as he rejoices in their joy, and

~~~~~ participates in their afflictions, he never suffers them to want a blessing which he can bestow, or to lament an evil which he can prevent: whilst he continueth with them, he administers to their present happiness, and provides for their future felicity when he shall be removed from them; he is doubly cautious in preserving his own character, because theirs depends upon it; he is prudent, therefore, that they may be happy, industrious that they may be rich, good and virtuous, that they may be respected: he instructs by his life, and teaches by his example: as he is thoroughly satisfied, that piety is the source and foundation of every virtue, he takes care to *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*: that they may be good *men*, he endeavours to make them good *christians*; and after having  
done

done every thing in his power to make SERM.  
them easy and happy here, points out III.  
to them the only infallible means of ~~~~~  
securing eternal bliss and tranquility  
hereafter.

Now to God the Father, &c.

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T H E



1871  
The first of the year  
to the first of the year  
to the first of the year  
to the first of the year

The first of the year  
to the first of the year  
to the first of the year  
to the first of the year

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# S E R M O N IV.

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## D U T Y to M A S T E R S.

C O L O S S. iii. 22.

*Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh: not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God.*

**H**AVING endeavoured in my **SERM.**  
two last discourses, to illustrate **IV.**  
and explain to you, the great  
and important duties of father and son,  
which so deservedly stand at the head  
of all our social connections; and which  
are indeed, so interwoven, as it were,  
with our very frame and constitution,  
as to form no inconsiderable part, both



SERM. of our merit and our happiness, let us de-

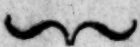
IV. scend, as I propos'd, from the all-power-  
ful ties of nature, to those of an inferior  
kind; to those, notwithstanding, by  
which the wisdom of God hath bound  
man to man, and which contribute to  
make us profitable and useful to each  
other. When we consider the innu-  
merable evils arising to society, from  
the carelessness and extravagance, or  
from the sloth and negligence of ser-  
vants, we cannot but acknowledge, that  
the due performance of their duty, in  
every particular, is a point of the utmost  
consequence; that every method should  
therefore be made use of to enforce, and  
every argument to recommend the prac-  
tice of it; because, in this large and com-  
plicated machine of the universe, if the  
smaller, or subordinate wheels, are out  
of order, it must of course, retard the  
motion, and interrupt the operations of  
the whole.

WE

WE are all of us, doubtless, by nature equal, created after the same divine similitude, made after the *image of God*, fellow-creatures and fellow-servants; all bound to obey the commands, and perform the sovereign will of one great Lord and Master of us all. But the supreme Being, hath in his divine wisdom, thought fit to make us, as the holy scripture expresses it, *members one of another*; without subordination, without order, rank and degree among men, the world would be a scene of anarchy and confusion: besides that, the various stations and circumstances of human life calls forth the various powers and faculties of men, and give them opportunities of exercising their several qualities and perfections. God, therefore, hath so ordained it, that some shall live upon the fruits of the earth, which the labour of others produceth, that in the great chain of nature, one link shall support



SERM. support the other; and that whilst it is

IV.  given to some, to spend their time in ease and affluence, others shall live by the *sweat of their brows*, shall bear the yoke of servitude, and be subject to the will and direction of their masters. Nor doth this difference and distinction, in the least, impeach the rectitude of the divine conduct; neither have we the least right, or reason, to complain of partiality or injustice. It would be very easy to shew, that, as the highest and most exalted stations are attended with numberless pains and inconveniences; the lowest also is not without its share of comfort and satisfaction: it would be no difficult task to convince the complaining servant, that the advantages of maintenance, support, and protection, from an indulgent master, the ease and tranquillity which it is always in his own power to procure, and many other advantages sufficiently obvious, are frequently an overbalance for

for the splendor of riches, and the dazzling lustre of independency. — But since to complain in this case, is as absurd as it is unjustifiable, because it cannot possibly relieve the sufferer; since it is the appointment of God, and therefore the duty of all, in patience and resignation, to submit to it, — Our time will be best employed in considering, if our lot has cast us into the humble vale of life, how we may best behave ourselves in it, perform the task which God hath imposed upon us, and insure to ourselves, that reward of inheritance, which he hath promised to those, who truly and faithfully discharge it.

AND herein the advice of the apostle, in my text, may serve us for a guide and director.

*Servants, says he, obey your masters in all things.*

Now



SERM.

IV.

Now, by the *Obedience* here expressed, how unlimited soever it may appear, we are not to understand, that a servant is obliged always to conform to the will and direction of his master, however unjust or unreasonable: for, if what he commands, (as may, and perhaps, doth frequently happen) be in direct opposition to the laws of God, or of man, the partial obligation by which he is connected, doth by no means bind him to the performance of it: the last contract we make, will not annul that which was prior to it: the relations which we bear to each other, were ordained to strengthen, and not to dissolve, the more powerful ties of justice and morality: he, therefore, who, the better to perform the first, breaks through and infringes the latter, is altogether as wise as he, who should endeavour to strengthen the building, by undermining the foundation. In all cases, therefore,

fore, where the servant's obedience in-  
terferes with divine or human laws, it  
is not required. — But, on the other  
hand, wherever it is consonant with rea-  
son and justice, it is to be paid with the  
utmost exactness: the will of the mas-  
ter is not, in matters indifferent, to be  
controverted or disputed; the mind,  
as well as body, should be pliant and  
flexible; opinions, if advanced at all,  
are to be tended with humility; and  
doubts, if proposed at all, proposed with  
deference and submission. — It may be,  
and perhaps is, every day alledged by  
those who are continually repining at  
their condition, that nothing is so mean  
and unworthy, so wretched and con-  
temptible, as to be entirely subservient  
to the will of others, to have no free-  
dom of judgment or decision of our  
own, but tamely and implicitly to  
reign to the caprice of such as are  
sometimes no better than ourselves:  
but it would well become those who

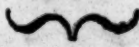
M

make



SERM. make the complaint, to reflect, that this  
IV. boasted privilege, which they are so  
loath to be deprived of, is often attended  
with the most fatal and destructive consequences; that those who say and do all that they will, very seldom either say or do as they ought; that to be left to ourselves, without constraint or controul, is so far from being a blessing, that it would be rather one of the greatest misfortunes which we can possibly fall into; and that as proud and as wil-  
lingas we all are to command, it is always more easy and more safe, very often even more pleasant to obey.

BUT it is not, as the apostle informs us, a mere external obedience which will acquit us: *Serve your masters*, says he, *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers*. It is not sufficient, that whilst servants are under the immediate inspection of their masters, they should behave with some degree of diligence and assiduity,  
but

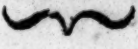
but that they should serve and oblige SERM.  
them with equal diligence when absent: IV.  
no eye but the eye of God can see   
every thing at all times, and in all  
places; it is impossible that any man,  
how careful and industrious soever he  
may be, can provide for every contin-  
gency, or see every thing executed which  
is necessary: he must depend in some  
measure, therefore, on the integrity of  
those beneath him. Here then will  
commence the true test of obedience,  
and the marks of unfeigned attachment  
and sincerity.

MUTUAL trust and confidence are  
the great bonds of society, without which  
it cannot possibly subsist: when we  
have bound ourselves, therefore, by so-  
lemn contract; when we have agreed,  
in return for the manifest benefits and  
advantages of daily support and protec-  
tion, to promote the interest and wel-  
fare of those who thus support and pro-  
tect us, the obligation is, doubtless, of



SERM. double force, and the neglect of it in-

IV.  finitely more unpardonable, because it adds fraud and treachery to rapine and injustice. He who deprives a stranger of his right, is a thief; but he who defrauds his master, is a traitor also; and though the lenity of human laws may inflict an equal punishment on both, they will certainly meet with very different treatment from the divine. Honesty and integrity are the most essential perfections of a good servant; as on these the security of every man's right and property, must, in some measure, depend. Servants should be extremely careful, not to secrete or embezzle the least part of that which is entrusted to them; because, when they have once brought themselves, by specious arguments, to believe that to defraud, or injure another, may be *sometimes* lawful, they will soon be persuaded that it is *always* so; and who will serve or defend those, who have betrayed that confidence

fidence which was reposed in them ; who SERM.  
have ruined and destroyed, those whom IV.  
they had sworn to guard and protect ? 

BUT it is further incumbent on every good servant, not only to be just, honest, and upright himself, but to take care, as far as in him lies, that others are just also : not to suffer his master, at any time, to be injured or defrauded. Men, frequently cheat themselves into an opinion, that they are not answerable for the wickedness which they connive at ; and, that they can only suffer for what they commit ; but, it is a miserable and fatal self-delusion ; a delusion, which will ruin their fame, character, and interest here ; and withal, greatly endanger the safety of their souls hereafter. For in the case now before us, as well as innumerable other instances which might be mentioned, that servant, who sees his master robbed, or betrayed ; who hears him calumniated, and abused, and is so mean,



SERM. mean, so timid and ungrateful, as to

IV. pass it over unnoticed, and unrepented,  
but ill deserves that protection and reward  
which he receives from him. There is  
not the least doubt to be made, but that,  
in these circumstances, to be silent is to  
be guilty, and he who conceals the  
crime, is in some measure accessory to it.

BUT another branch of the servant's  
obedience, and without which he cannot  
indeed, properly, deserve the name of  
one, is diligence ; and the want of this  
is most inexcusable ; because it is a per-  
fection which it is in the power of  
all to attain ; and it requires nothing  
but a willing mind to the performance  
of it ; it is of the utmost service and as-  
sistance to parts and genius where they  
*are*, and in a great measure supplies their  
place where they are *not* : it is, after all,  
but a species of the duty I just now men-  
tioned, of uprightness and integrity ; for  
he who is not industrious, is not honest ;  
and

and to be diligent, is only to be just. SERM.  
the master has as good a right to the IV.  
labour, time, and assiduity of the servant, as the servant can possibly have to the support, protection and wages of his master: If the latter, therefore, performs his part of the contract, the former cannot, without the utmost injustice, withhold the other: he should place himself in the circumstances and situation, then, of his master; he should give the same industry, and assiduity to his affairs, as if they were his own: his own, in reality, they most certainly are; because, on the success and fortune of the one, the ease and maintenance of the other must depend: and yet, what dreadful consequences have arisen to the best of men, from the ill conduct and behaviour of those whom they had hired to ruin and betray them! Such inconsistent judges are we of what is truly valuable in this life, that where we promise ourselves the greatest pleasure, we  
often



SERM. often meet with the bitterest disappointment;  
IV. and what flattered us with the fairest prospect, brings with it the greatest trouble and anxiety. To make a splendid appearance, to boast a numerous retinue, to have a croud of vassals attendant on our pleasure, and subservient to our commands, may sooth the pride and vanity of our hearts; but doth it not often happen, that these are treasures which we pay very dearly for? that our servants ruin and betray us? that their negligence destroys, their dishonesty undermines, their extravagance ruins their masters? and thus the very thing which caused the envy, is that which most deserves the pity of our inferiors.

But the apostle, in the latter part of my text, has recommended a virtue, which would prevent all these evils, and promote every good; he has recommended a perfection which will strengthen and cement all the rest; and that is,  
*singleness.*

*singleness of heart*, a pious conscientious SERM.  
 regard to the engagement we have en- IV.  
 tered into: *Whatever ye do*, says he, *do* ~~~~~  
*it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto*  
*men.* Whatsoever we do heartily, we  
 shall always do effectually. Servants,  
 therefore should endeavour to inculcate  
 in themselves, a desire of pleasing and  
 obliging; they should create, as it were,  
 a tenderness and affection for those whom  
 they serve.

Love is, indeed, the life and soul of  
 every relative duty; the powerful enli-  
 vening principle, which alone can in-  
 spire us with vigour and activity in the  
 execution of it: without this, even di-  
 ligence is ungrateful, and submission  
 itself has the air of disobedience; a  
 cold, languid, spiritless compliance with  
 the will of another seems forced and  
 extorted, and when those whom we  
 expect to follow us through life must,  
 be dragged after us, it retards our pro-  
 gress

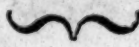


SERM. greffs, and at the same time takes off

IV.  half the pleasure of the journey. But, on the other hand, when reciprocal trust and confidence, have produced mutual love and affection, every thing flows on in an easy, uninterrupted course of joy and satisfaction; pleasure and duty go hand in hand, *righteousness and peace kiss each other*: every wish on each side is prevented, and every jealousy removed; the master's will is known before it is expressed, and the service performed even before it is commanded.

Thus good, thus profitable, and thus happy, are they who act from *singleness of heart, fearing God*. The *fear of God*, in this, as in every thing else, *is the beginning of wisdom*. Those servants, indeed, who wrong or betray, who injure or neglect their masters, have reason to fear that God whom they have offended; because, when we are deficient in any of those duties which we

owe

owe to our neighbour, we transgress the SERM.  
laws of the most High: in all our rela- IV.  
tions and connections with each other,   
God is the witness to every contract,  
and must know whether we perform it  
or not: he is the great guardian of the  
rights and privileges of all mankind; he  
sits on the seat to *do judgment and justice*;  
and when any are oppressed or injured  
here, to him they must appeal for re-  
drefs; if the servant, therefore, wrong  
his master; if he is dishonest, slothful, idle  
and extravagant, God will avenge the  
cause of the injured, and cast *the un-*  
*profitable servant into utter darkness, where*  
*shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of*  
*teeth*. Whilst, on the other hand, if the  
servant obey his master in all things  
with *singleness of heart, fearing God*;  
if he is honest, faithful, diligent and  
grateful, he shall, as the apostle says,  
*receive the inheritance*. It is the hap-  
piness of servants, and ought with gra-  
titude to be remembered by them, that  
N 2 they



SERM. they have better and more frequent op-

IV.  opportunities of recommending themselves to God than their superiors. Honesty, frugality, temperance, faithfulness and humility, those truly christian virtues, which they are called on, every day, to exercise, are more particularly adapted to their station and circumstances in life; what we cannot easily subsist without, we are readily induced to acquire; is it not then, a peculiar privilege which servants enjoy, that what is their duty is, most apparently, their interest also; and that which constitutes their present happiness, will, at the same time, ensure their future felicity?

To sum up all, therefore, in the character of

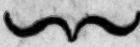
### A G O O D S E R V A N T.

THE *good servant* will obey his master in all things; will readily and implicitly submit

submit to his commands, without mur- SERM.  
muring or reluctance; will execute them IV.  
with zeal, chearfulness and alacrity; ~~~~~  
will be strictly honest, just and faithful,  
with regard to every thing committed  
to his care; endeavouring to promote  
in others that fidelity, which he doth  
himself practice; and to dissuade them  
from that fraud of corruption, which he  
doth himself abhor: he will be too ac-  
tive and vigilant in the discharge of his  
duty, to stand in need of any admoni-  
tions to the performance, or any re-  
proaches for the omission of it; he will  
insensibly contract an esteem and regard  
for those whom he serves, which will  
naturally grow up into the tenderest re-  
gard and affection for them; so that  
his labour will become the labour of  
love, and his service perfect freedom:  
he will consider himself bound by the  
laws of God, as well as by the laws of  
men, to the punctual discharge of that  
relation which he hath entered into; not  
merely



SERM. merely as a civil, but as a moral and re-

IV. ligious obligation: he will not, therefore, content himself with eye-service, but, at all times, be diligent and assiduous, as conscious, that he hath not only an earthly, but an heavenly Master, who knoweth every word and every action; who *seeth in secret*, and will one day, either punish or *reward him openly*.

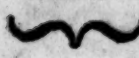
TO CONCLUDE, therefore—

A TIME, we know, will come, (and it cannot be far from every one of us) when we must, all once more, be upon a level; when all rank and degree shall cease, and all distinctions vanish: in the grave we shall be equal; where *the wicked cease from troubling*, and the *weary are at rest*; where *the prisoners rest together*, and *hear not the voice of the oppressor*: from that place, he that created all, shall call forth his creatures, *high and low, rich and poor one with another*: they shall the *servant be a servant no more*;

*more*; God, the great deliverer,, shall SERM.  
shake off his chains, and break his bonds IV.  
in funder: then shall those, whose low  
and hard condition in this life, subjected  
them to toil and labour, receive the re-  
ward of rest and tranquility: — if they  
have performed their duty in that sta-  
tion which God allotted them, they shall  
receive the inheritance which he hath  
promised them: they who have groaned  
under the hand of tyranny and oppres-  
sion, shall enjoy the blessings of free-  
dom and indulgence, and those who  
have been the servants of men, shall be-  
come the sons of God; they shall be-  
come the servants of that best and kind-  
est Master, who will lay no harsh com-  
mands upon them, require no unpleas-  
ing or unreasonable service; but, instead  
of burthening them with new tasks, will  
only recompence them for what they  
have already performed; a Master, who,  
when they approach his throne with  
humility, will receive them with the  
kindest



SERM. kindest salutation, and with the tenderest

IV.  endearments; who will crown all their wishes, and satisfy all their desires, when he shall say unto them: *Well have ye done, my good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.*

Now to God the Father, &c.

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THE

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THE  
D U T Y  
OF  
M A S T E R S  
TO  
S E R V A N T S.

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# S E R M O N V.

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## DUTY TO SERVANTS.

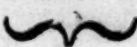
C O L O S S. iv. i.

*Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.*

**T**H E gracious providence of God, SERM. V.  
exerted constantly and invariably  
towards mankind, is not in any  
thing more immediately visible, than in  
that very part of the divine conduct to  
which the foolish unbeliever hath the  
strongest objection. The unequal distri-  
bution of things in this short and tran-  
sitORY life, the great power, riches and  
abundance, happiness, knowledge and  
O 2 capacity



SERM. capacity of some, the no less distinguished weakness, indigence, poverty and  
V. ignorance of others, were so ordained, no doubt, by the creator of all, to set in motion the various qualities and perfections of our nature; to teach us, that we were born to serve and love one another; to employ our health, strength and plenty, for the support and comfort of the weak, the sick, and the necessitous. To some, therefore, he hath appointed their station in the humble vale of submission and dependency, put upon them the yoke of servitude, and subjected them to the will of their superiors: others, at the same time, he hath thought fit to exalt to rank, fortune and precedence; to give them rule over their brethren; to endow them with power and abundance: but, in return for this power and authority, for the good things of life, which he hath thus graciously bestowed on the great, our Master, which is in heaven, expects that we, on our part, should take  
care

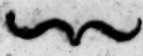
care of our servants upon earth; that SERM.  
we should give them all things that are V.  
*just and equal.* 

By *just and equal*, we are, doubtless, to understand all the various parts of a master's duty to his servant which circumstance, merit, or occasion may at any time require of him: in these words, therefore, are comprehended and implied, not only justice in the strict and limited sense, but maintenance and protection, indulgence and tenderness, advice and instruction, pardon and forgiveness.

Nothing can be more self-evident, than that those who contribute, in a great measure, to our ease and happiness, have an indisputable title to a reward from us. Amongst wild and barbarous nations, where power is gained and supported by mere force and brutality, men  
may



SERM. may exercise a savage authority over

V.  their slaves and vassals, without considering themselves bound to any grateful return for their toils and service; but in the more refined parts of the world, at all times, and in all nations, the obligations of master and servant, have been considered as mutual; it is a close and intimate relation, a solemn engagement entered into by them both, and which both are equally bound to discharge. The first great duty, therefore, incumbent on masters is, strictly and punctually to abide by their contract, and to reward the servant for his labour, according to the agreements made between them: and yet, even this common act of justice and humanity is not always performed; though it cannot be withheld from them without the most flagrant and glaring impiety. Thus far we are bound by the common ties of equity, which bind man to man, and without

without which, society indeed, cannot SERM.  
subsist. V.

BUT by giving unto our servants, what is *just and equal*, the apostle, undoubtedly, implied something more than the strict performance of this mutual contract. To justice, we must add benevolence also. Those who enter into a state of servitude, are generally poor and destitute; they have no friends able to support or protect them, and, therefore, have recourse to a master: to him they fly, as to an asylum, from the injuries and oppressions of a cruel world: they are driven, as it were, into this harbour, by the storms and tempests of human life, which beat hard upon them, and force them in for immediate shelter and preservation: we cannot, therefore, in such distressful circumstances, refuse our assistance to them; if they are faithful and diligent in the discharge of their office,

we



SERM. we are, in some measure, indebted to  
V. them for their care and fidelity.

IN all civilized countries, as well as in our own, the servants of the public are taken care of by the public: those who have spent their lives in the service of the state, and been useful to the commonweal in their youth, are maintained and supported by it in their age. The same reason should, doubtless, hold good with regard to the private service of individuals; and we are bound to preserve and support those who have long faithfully discharged their duty to us. The fidelity, carefulness and sobriety of a good servant, hath often restored those fortunes which have been well nigh dissipated by much nearer relations; and where one hath performed that duty, which the other hath totally neglected, he is most certainly intitled to the greater reward.

BUT

SERM.

V.

BUT, moreover, it often happens, that those are reduced to a state of penury and servitude, who have lived in ease and affluence, and that such as have been long used to command, are forced to obey: these, no doubt, both call for and deserve a more than ordinary tenderness, and peculiar delicacy of behaviour towards them; we should lay the burthen of labour in such a manner, as to make them least sensible of it, and, if we cannot raise them to what they were, we should degrade ourselves, as it were, to what they have been: we all of us experience, some time or other, how irksome and disagreeable it is to be subservient to the will of others: when even the rich and great, therefore, are forced to pay homage to their superiors, the uneasiness which they feel on the occasion should be an useful lesson of instruction, and teach them to behave with humanity and good nature towards

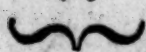
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those



SERM. those beneath them. There is always

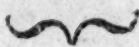
V.



a lively sensibility which attends the indigent and miserable, and more especially those who have seen better days, which awakens them to the quickest resentment; they are often jealous of an injury where it is not meant, and shrink under the wound even before it is given. When haughty and imperious masters, therefore, behave with insolence, and speak with contempt of their servants, it is both unjust and inhuman, because it is imputing that to them as a crime, which should be pitied as a misfortune; and to reproach them for being unhappy, is, in effect, to make them so. The unmanly and ungenerous treatment of our inferiors is, doubtless, the mark of a mind, as weak, as it must be wicked; for, to insult those who cannot return the insult, is cowardice; and it is the height of folly to triumph, where there is no glory in the conquest.

SERV-

SERM.

V.  


SERVITUDE is, surely, by no means eligible; it hath miseries and inconveniences sufficient, even in its best condition; how then, can we embitter that draught which is already so nauseous and unpalatable? shall we not have compassion on our fellow-creatures? shall we not endeavour to make their *yoke easy, and their burthen light*? A kind and tender behaviour to servants will, above all things, most ensure their fidelity, and endear us to them; the soft voice of good-nature and affability, will be heard much farther by the ear of gratitude, than the loud and tumultuous clamour of pride and self-sufficiency: it is not so much what masters oblige their servants to do, as the manner in which they oblige them to do it; it is not so much what they speak, as the manner in which it is spoken; which, for the most part, gives the greatest joy or sorrow: a harsh and disagreeable method



SERM. of expressing ourselves, will make the  
V. easiest task seem burthensome and oppressive; whilst, on the other hand, he who orders with lenity and mildness, is obeyed with chearfulness and alacrity, and the command hath the air of a request: thus, he who lays it, preserves the power and authority of a master, and yet is served with all the zeal and affection of a friend.

BUT, as the servant hath a right to some degree of tenderness and indulgence, so hath he also, to pardon and forgiveness.

WE are all of us liable to errors, both of judgment and of will: if we expect to be pardoned for them ourselves, we should also forgive those who commit them against us. Servants may err from ignorance and inadvertency, they may even commit a fault, where they meant to perform a duty; their ignorance, there-

therefore, is to be passed over, and their SERM.  
inadvertency excused. We should re- V.  
member, when servants offend, the ex-  
ample of our Saviour and master Jesus  
Christ: when his listless and indolent  
disciples, careless of their master's ap-  
proaching fate, and in contempt of his  
express command, fell asleep, with what  
humanity doth he chide, and with what  
tenderneſs reprove them! *Could ye not  
watch with me, ſays he, one hour? But  
ſleep on, and take your reſt.* They were  
without excuse, and he kindly puts one  
into their mouths: *the ſpirit, ſaid he,  
is willing, but the fleſh is weak.* Was  
not this the beſt method to rouse their  
attention, and alarm them to a proper  
ſenſe of their duty? could ſervants re-  
fuſe, after this, to live and die for  
ſuch a Maſter?

BUT beſides this tenderneſs and in-  
dulgence, this maintenance and protec-  
tion, this pardon and forgivenenſs, the  
ſervant



SERM. servant is intituled also, from the pious  
V. and christian master, to his frequent ad-  
vice and instruction.

THOSE who in their earlier years have been oppressed by want and penury, are seldom blest with the advantages of a good and liberal education; their ideas are confined in a very narrow circle, their minds often biaſſed towards evil, by habit and custom, and kept in total ignorance and darkness, from the want of opportunities to improve: a master, therefore, if he hath leiſure and capacity, ſhould endeavour to open and enlighten them, he ſhould teach them their duty, both towards God and towards man; inſtruct them in that religion, which he himſelf profeſſeth; and explain thoſe doctrines by which he regulates his own conduct and behaviour. And that he may the better perform this important task, his advice muſt be ſtrengthened by his life, and his precepts enforced.

enforced by his example. It becometh all SERM.  
men no doubt, and above all men it be- V.  
cometh christians, to be cautious and  
prudent in their behaviour; to attend  
the house of God, and perform every  
act of piety and devotion, with that de-  
cency and solemnity which they require;  
but, to the master of a family, these  
obligations are, every one of them, more  
cogent and more binding. When a  
man hath once taken upon him this im-  
portant office (for so it is) the circle of  
his duties is then enlarged, and extends  
itself on every side: it is then incumbent  
on him, to let no bad examples, much  
less his own, influence the lives and  
manners of those he is placed over: he  
is the chief actuating spring which is  
to direct the whole machine: he is the  
head, and when that is out of order, the  
members will no longer perform their  
office, and all the frame is in immediate  
danger of dissolution: he is to be a pat-  
tern to them in every word and work:

he,



SERM. he, therefore, should be careful, that  
 V. not a word pass his lips, which is im-  
 modest or profane, idle or ridiculous;  
 that not an action be attributed to him  
 that is evil, least they call in his wicked-  
 ness to countenance their folly, his au-  
 thority and example to give a sanction  
 to their guilt.

WHEN servants see their masters liv-  
 ing in a continued scene of riot, madness  
 and debauchery, in open contempt and  
 defiance of God's laws, is it probable,  
 that they themselves, should any longer  
 pay the least regard to them? will they  
 give ear to those doctrines which their  
 masters condemn, that religion which  
 they despise, or that redeemer which  
 they ridicule and scoff at?

NOTHING, I believe, hath so much  
 tended to the corruption and depravity  
 of the age we live in, as the bad exam-  
 ples of the rich and great amongst us:  
 vice

vice had, perhaps, as many followers in SERM.  
the days of our forefathers as in our V.  
own, but then it must be acknowledg-  
ed, they did not enter so publicly and  
openly into her service: the rich and  
powerful, were at all times, and in all  
ages, licentious and extravagant; but  
they, had the modesty, at least, to avoid  
the appearance of it.

WHAT the effects of a conduct di-  
rectly opposite to this, must inevitably be,  
we need not foretel; but certain it is,  
that the bad example of the great, hath  
so far influenced their inferiors, that the  
follies, which once confined themselves  
to courts and palaces, are to be found  
even in the cottages of the poor, and  
the majority of servants are almost as  
vicious as their masters.

Let those who thus despise the apos-  
tle's advice in the former part of my  
text, remember what he makes men-

Q

tion



SERM. tion of in the latter; let them reflect  
V. and know, that *they also have a master in  
heaven*: they who acknowledge none  
upon earth, will find one there; *know-  
ing*, says the apostle, *that ye also have  
a master in heaven.*

EQUALITY of circumstance and condition, doth naturally, and of necessity, produce some degree of love and attention: the sick have compassion for the sick, the old have tenderness for the old, the poor man is melted by the tears of indigence; and he, who hath any distress or calamity of his own, has generally a heart to feel for the distresses and calamities of others. The surest method, therefore, of becoming good, humane and tender masters to our servants is, to reflect that we also, *are servants* ourselves; that we have all our allotted portions of toil and labour, our various services which we are bound to perform; that our behaviour to those  
beneath

beneath us, is amongst those services; SERM.  
and that it is, indeed, no inconsiderable V.  
part of our duty towards our great Lord  
and Master: *with the same measure that  
we mete withal, it shall be measured to  
us again.* If we are kind and indulgent  
to our servants, God will be so to us;  
if we pass over their failings, excuse  
their ignorance, palliate their weakness,  
and pardon their inadvertencies, he also,  
*will not be extreme to mark* when we  
*do amiss*; he will consider our infirmi-  
ties, forgive our follies, pity, assist and  
remove our ignorance. But, on the other  
hand, we are to remember, that if *we  
have a master in heaven*, he is a master to  
punish, as well as to reward: that he is  
not like earthly masters, to be im-  
posed upon or deluded; that he will  
have the service of the whole heart;  
no partial, imperfect, insincere obedi-  
ence, but an absolute, ready, vigilant  
compliance with all his commands,  
which are not, cannot be like our own,



SERM. harsh, impracticable or unreasonable,  
 V. but such as becomes an all-wise and  
 gracious sovereign to lay upon us.

HAVING explained and illustrated, therefore, the several duties of a master recommended in the text, I cannot conclude better, than in uniting them all in a brief description of

### A G O O D M A S T E R.

THE *good master* then, is one who, as St. Paul says, *gives unto his servant that which is just and equal*: one, who from a conscientious regard to his duty, and in obedience to the divine will, is resolved to discharge and fulfil them in this, as well as every other particular; one, who considers his servant not, as many do, as a being of an inferior rank and species, sent into the world merely to be subservient to his commands, and born only to perform them

them, and whom, therefore, he hath a SERM.  
right to treat as he thinks most proper V.  
and convenient, but as a creature of the  
same rank and dignity with himself,  
made after the same divine image; as  
one who, though not so considerable, is  
yet perhaps an equally useful member  
of society, to whom providence hath ap-  
pointed an humbler, station in this life;  
one, whom he hath entered into solemn  
contract and agreement with, for the reci-  
procal preservation of their mutual peace  
and happiness: as such, therefore, he  
pays with the utmost strictness and punc-  
tuality, whatever is due to him for his  
labour and servitude. But moreover,  
whilst he is engaged in this labour and  
service, the good master thinks it his  
indispensible duty to support and pro-  
tect him: he will not suffer any other  
to exercise that power and authority over  
him, which he only hath a right to,  
much less to insult or oppress him:  
the good master will, now and then  
in-



SERM. indulge his servant in some remis-

V. sion and relaxation; he will slacken  
a little, the reins of government, loosen  
the bonds of servitude, and make him  
as easy and contented as his condition  
will permit; if he offends from ignorance,  
he will rather endeavour to remove than to  
resent it; if from inadvertency, he will  
pardon; if, even, from the worst of causes,  
he will sometimes, nay, even frequently,  
forgive him. Besides this, the good, that is,  
the conscientious and pious master, will look  
upon himself bound, as a christian, to guide,  
instruct and admonish his servants, to guide  
them by his wisdom, to admonish them by  
his knowledge, to instruct them by his example:  
he will shew that he is fit to rule over others  
by the command which he hath of his own  
passions, and keep the noblest superiority  
over his servants, the superiority of virtue.

LASTLY,

LASTLY, the good master will consider his servants as fellow-creatures, and fellow-servants, and treat them as such, as *brethren by adoption*, the sons of one common father, and joint inheritors of the kingdom of God; he will remember, that *he also hath a master in heaven*: he will consider, therefore, that as he acts towards his inferiors, God will act towards him: that a day will come, when all must be upon a level, and the servant shall be equal to his master: that in that day, if he hath behaved with tenderness and humanity, he shall meet and embrace him as a friend; and they shall join like friends and brethren, in humble adoration of the great Lord, Creator, Father, and Master of them both.

To whom, &c.

T H E



The first of the month was a very fine day  
and the weather was very pleasant. The  
land was very dry and the crops were  
very poor. The water was very low and  
the fish were very scarce. The people  
were very poor and the land was very  
dry. The water was very low and the  
fish were very scarce. The people were  
very poor and the land was very dry.

To whom it may concern

Yours truly

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THE  
D U T Y  
O F  
W I V E S  
T O  
H U S B A N D S.

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R





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# S E R M O N VI.

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## D U T Y T O H U S B A N D S.

E P H E S. V. 33.

*Let every one of you love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

**H**A V I N G endeavoured to enforce SERM. VI.  
and recommend the several inferior duties of child and father, servant and master, I come now to consider the great parent root from whence these branches originally proceed, the fountain and foundation of them, that close and intimate connection which gives rise to all the rest, the duties of husband and wife, those sacred and indissoluble



SERM. soluble ties, which constitute the happiness or misery of the greatest part of the Christian world.

VI.

It may not be amiss, before I proceed to the consideration of this subject, to remark, that marriage is one of those things, which, however lightly it may be esteemed, or spoken of, by the gay and dissolute; is, notwithstanding, a matter of the utmost consequence, and importance, as the welfare of society in general, together with the ease and happiness of individuals, doth in a great measure depend upon it: I cannot, therefore, but be of opinion, that the unbounded freedom of speech, the unwearied endeavours of licenc'd ridicule, with which it is so familiarly and so universally treated, hath greatly contributed to the frequent contempt of this duty on each side, and the no less frequent violation of it of late years so visible amongst us. Let us endeavour, then

then to rescue it from the hands of libertines, and the mouth of the scoffer. SERM.  
VI.  
And to this end, I propose to point out to you, the several parts of this reciprocal duty, and to recommend those virtues which are more immediately necessary towards the performance of it.

*Let every one of you, says St. Paul, so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

Under the two leading and essential points, which are here mentioned by the holy apostle, we may fairly comprehend all those duties, that are requisite to make the marriage state easy and happy: love and affection will naturally produce tenderness and fidelity; and reverence will as constantly and invariably be attended with humility, prudence and devotion; and wherever these unite, they cannot fail to constitute mutual and lasting felicity.

As



## SERM.

VI. As in the preceding discourses I have  
~~~~~ begun with the inferior duty, I shall proceed in the same manner with regard to the subject under our present consideration, and endeavour to point out to you, wherein the duty of a wife to her husband, doth principally consist.

THE wife, then, should be faithful and constant, humble and obedient, prudent and discreet, tender and kind, affectionate and pious.

THE sovereign virtue requisite in the married state, is FIDELITY, without which it cannot subsist: no perfections or qualities whatever, can make amends for the want of it; no excuses whatever can be admitted to palliate the least departure from it: both parties are bound in the most solemn manner, to maintain and preserve it inviolable, and the infringement of it will render them obnoxious

noxious to the resentment both of God **SERM.**
and man: the necessity is, in truth, **VI.**
so self-evident, that I shall dwell no further on it at present, than to observe, that the neglect of it on the part of the wife is always attended with more fatal and destructive consequences than on the part of the husband; because, she is the guardiau of his honour as well as her own; because, he suffers for her guilt, and is punished for her iniquity.

A virtuous woman, says Solomon, is a crown to her husband, but she that maketh ashamed, is as rottenness in his bones. It is to be hoped, that in a Christian country, there are not many instances to be found of conjugal falsehood and infidelity. I shall not at present, therefore, dwell on this point, but proceed to that most necessary and essential duty of a wife, OBEDIENCE.

SOCIETY,

SERM.

VI.

SOCIETY, we know, cannot possibly subsist without subordination: states and kingdoms can never flourish or increase, unless some preside at the helm, to guide and direct, whilst others follow and obey; without a head, the members cannot perform their offices: without some ruling hand, invested with power and authority to govern, punish or reward, there can be nothing but anarchy and confusion: and the same is equally necessary, in all private connections: superior power must be lodged in one hand, and the only doubt that can arise, if any doubt there be, is, to whom that power doth of right belong.

THE words of the apostle with regard to this, are very plain and explicit. *The husband, says he, is the head of the wife. Man was not of the woman, but the woman of the man.* Priority of birth, at their original formation, seeming to imply

ply and point out the precedency : but there is withal a reason which carries with it the highest conviction, and that is, the visible superiority of one sex over the other, so manifest in the abilities both of mind and body.

SERM.
VI.

ARGREEABLE to the dictates of reason in this respect, as indeed in all others, are the dictates of religion. Obedience of wives is the commandment of God himself ; *Thy desire shall be to thy husband, says he, he shall rule over thee. Wives submit yourselves, says St. Paul, to your husbands, as unto the Lord :* that is, be assured that duty towards your husband is part of your duty towards God ; that when you love the one, you please the other ; when you disobey the one, you offend the other : you are bound to obedience not only by the promise made to your husband, but by a still more solemn engagement, by a promise made to the Almighty. God is not only a

S

witness

SERM. witness of the contract, but a part in it ;

VI. he hath claim to a share in every connection, duty and relation, we enter into : the husband cannot release the wife, nor the wife the husband ; the servant his master, nor the master his servant ; the father the son, nor the son his father from the punctual discharge of them, without his divine consent and approbation : and though in regard to individuals, it may so happen, that the direct contrary to what hath been advanced may be indisputably true, no argument can thence be drawn against the general conclusion.

The son may, and frequently hath a larger portion of parts and understanding than his father, and servants better genius, sense and capacity than their masters ; and yet it must be acknowledged, that this, in either case would be a poor plea for their rebellion and disobedience.

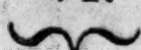
HALF

HALF the miseries of mankind arise from pride and self-love; from that vain conceit we are so apt to entertain of ourselves, and of our own abilities.

The good and prudent wife, who is satisfied of that natural superiority of man, which I have just now mentioned, will consider, that in cases of importance, the husband's knowledge and experience should make him a better judge than her; and therefore she should submit, and in matters of little or no consequence it is surely scarce worth while to dispute about them. If disputes however, do arise, mutual good nature and condescension will prevent acrimony, bitterness and anger. Let the end proposed therefore in all be truth and not victory, and the desire of both to convince, and not to conquer.

SERM.

VI.



To obedience therefore should also be added quietness and HUMILITY. The virtues of a woman were not meant to glare in the dazzling lustre of public business, but are cast as it were into the shades of life, in the mild majesty of private, social, domestic happiness.

Let women adorn themselves, says St. Paul, in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety, not with brodered hair or gold, or pearls, or costly array ; for I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Silence indeed is for the most part apter to persuade than argument ; when the storm meets with resistance, it is generally the most violent ; and the tender plant which bends beneath the blast, is much safer than the lofty oak which seems to defy it. After all, it is the wife's interest as well as duty, to be in subjection to her husband ; because she who

most

most easily complies with his will, is, for SERM.
the most part indulged in her own; and VI.
she hath the most frequent opportunities
to command, who is most ready and
most willing to obey. A meek and quiet
spirit, we know, is with God of the high-
est value. It may indeed happen, and
frequently doth, that this meek and quiet
spirit shall but provoke a morose and
surly temper to greater insults; and that
the coward who finds no resistance,
will repeat the blow. But to those
notwithstanding who have humility,
there is this consolation still behind,
that however man may despise the jewel,
God who knows its value will hold it of
great price. A thousand testimonies of
conjugal fidelity, love, tenderness, af-
fection, and forgiveness, may escape the
eye of a vicious or of an indifferent
husband, unknown and unregarded:
but that eye which seeth and knoweth
all things will observe them: and what
is still more to be wished and desired,
we

SERM. we may be certain, that wherever he
VI. sees virtue, he must approve it; and
~~~~~ wherever he approves, he is sure to re-  
ward.

PROCEED we then to the next essential quality of a good wife, DISCRETION. Conquests acquired by force, are maintained by policy; and the hearts which love hath subdued, must be preserved by prudence: the dominion of youth and beauty is arbitrary and despotic, but like other tyrannies seldom of any long duration. Prudence therefore, that faithful minister, must be called in to subdue the rebel passions, maintain a due ballance and proportion, and keep the sovereign on the throne. Whilst tender years and inexperience palliate every error, and excuse every inadvertency, prudence is not perhaps so immediately necessary; but when women have past that favourable indulgent season, and have entered into a situation

tuation which calls for the exercise of SERM.  
this virtue every hour, it then becomes VI.  
absolutely and really indispensable ; and  
the want of it is as inexcusable as  
it is fatal and destructive ; and yet I  
know not how it is, but almost every  
other virtue is more frequently to be  
met with. At that time of life when  
we most stand in need of it, it is seldom  
seen, and doth not make its appearance  
till it can be of little service to us : To  
wives, we know, it often comes when  
its powers are languid and ineffectual,  
the affection of the husband is already  
estranged by infidelity, changed by in-  
difference, or decayed by ingratitude, dis-  
cretion steps in at last to regain it ; like  
an able physician, it is not called till the  
last gasp, when it is much too late to  
save the patient.

NOTHING is in reality so unsuitable  
to the dignity, so unbecoming the  
character of a good and virtuous wife, as  
that



## The DUTY of

that indiscreet carelessness and levity of behaviour which has of late years crept in amongst us. The taste of pleasure and diversions is grown so universal, that family duties, and family decency and decorum also are greatly neglected. The old and the young, the married and the single, are so blended together in the general mass of folly; the carriage, manners and behaviour of all are so equally gay and dissolute, that they set the examples of vice, whose duty it is to keep others from it; and scarce any thing is left to distinguish the matron from her daughter, but the wrinkles which she cannot hide, and the years which she cannot conceal.

When one sex thus forget station, rank, and circumstance, can we be surprised to find the other unwilling to remember it? when women no longer behave themselves as wives, do they desire, or can they expect to be treated

as

as such? Whilst there is a desire in every  
gesture, word and action to please, all in-  
discriminately, can we suppose there is  
a strong or powerful attachment to  
any individual? Let those, therefore,  
who follow a giddy, thoughtless multi-  
tude, through the perpetual round of  
fashionable follies, remember, that a-  
musement is no longer innocent when it  
interferes with duty; that example can  
only countenance that guilt which it  
doth not extenuate, and that public plea-  
sure is dearly bought which is purchased  
at the expence of private happiness.

SERM.

VI.

WOMEN, as well as men, are bound  
by the religion of Christ, not only to  
avoid vice, but the appearance of it:  
not only to be virtuous, but to seem so;  
besides that, their reputation is of so  
tender a nature, that it is not always in  
the power even of innocence itself to  
preserve it. Those who have only been

T

careless



SERM. VI. careleſs, are generally cenſured as guilty, and calumny will often puniſh for crimes which have never been committed. There is a great degree of imprudence, therefore, in laying ourſelves open to ſuſpicion: ſhe, who is ſo indifferent as to affect folly, is in great danger of falling a ſacrifice to it; and the wife who is very vicious in appearance, doth not deſerve much leſs blame than her who is ſo in reality. The truly good and virtuous wife, will conſider the honour of her huſband as a precious jewel entrusted to her care, which it is her duty to preſerve free from every ſpot, or blemiſh that might diminifh its luſtre or impair its beauty.

THE beſt preſervative of female honour, therefore, is female delicacy: modeſty is the hand-maid of virtue, appointed to tend, to dreſs, and ſerve her: it is, as it were, a kind of armour, which

which the sex should always bear, both to adorn and to defend them; and, when that is laid aside, they are neither beautiful nor safe.

SERM.

VI.

THERE was a time when the reservedness and modesty of women exempted them from many considerable privileges which they now enjoy; when that unbounded freedom of converse, which the present age allows, was held inconsistent with female delicacy; when not the gay companion, nor the lively visitant, but the good and prudent wife, were esteemed the best of characters: it would become those, who have introduced and encouraged this change of manners, to consider, whether the pleasures have not interfered with the business, and the duties of life been sacrificed to the imperinencies of it; whether the matrons of former ages were not, at least, as modest, if not so well bred, as those who come

T 2

after



SERM. after them ; and whether, what the sex  
VI. hath gained in politeness, it hath not lost  
in virtue? There is, (if I may be allowed  
the expression) a sex of soul, as well as  
body, and the distinction is as visible in  
the one, as in the other. The female  
mind, as well as form, is naturally more  
soft and delicate ; the spirits more brisk  
and volatile ; the heart more immedi-  
ately susceptible of pain or pleasure than  
our own : as their frame can boast of  
finer harmony, symmetry and propor-  
tion, though of less strength, firmness  
and activity, in the same manner, the  
sentiments of the softer sex abound in a  
peculiar tenderness, delicacy and viva-  
city : if they are not solid, they are re-  
fined ; if they are not correct, they are  
lively ; if they are not just and serious,  
they are natural and chearful ; to each  
is imparted by the providence of  
God that which the other stands in  
need of : man was born to govern, to  
guard

guard and protect; women to obey, to SERM.  
please, and to reward. When men, VI.  
therefore, sink into sloth and effemi-  
nacy, and women assume a masculine  
boldness and audacity, they are acting  
contrary to the designs of nature, and  
of God; and can never be the ob-  
jects of esteem or approbation, much  
less of love or affection. Whilst, like  
neighbouring monarchs, they are care-  
ful to remain in their own territories,  
and do not encroach on each other's  
borders, they will be respected as law-  
ful sovereigns: but when, like usurpers,  
they invade the rights and privileges of  
each other, they will be treated as such;  
and whilst they are employed in the  
conquest of kingdoms which do not  
belong to them, will be deprived of their  
own.

PASS we on, then, to that best ce-  
ment of domestic happiness, mutual for-  
bearance and complacency; and these, per-  
haps,



SERM. haps, like constancy and fidelity, are, in  
VI. some measure, more necessary on the part  
~~~~~ of the wife, than of the husband.

THOSE who have the management and direction of affairs, whatever station, business or profession they are engaged in, must meet with various crosses, misfortunes and disappointments: the ways of this life are, at best, but rugged and uneven; briars and thorns spring up on every side of us: and, even the most flowery and delightful paths are full of danger; man, therefore, as most able, is appointed to perform the journey. The greatest part of the world are forced to gain their living by the sweat of their brow: the toil and labour of providing for his household, of acquiring what is necessary and convenient, falls to the lot of the industrious husband. Too well we know, that in an evil and corrupt world, the best intentions, and the most honest endeavours of the best men
may

may be frustrated ; losses, vexations and troubles are perpetually arising : such accidents, and such we are every day liable to, will sower the sweetest dispositions, throw a gloom over the chearfullest face, and fill the firmest heart with anguish and disquietude. How then, is the good and virtuous wife, the partner of his joys and sorrows, to behave in the hour of distress ? Is she to reproach his melancholy, to inflame his passion, to embitter his disquietude ? or, is she, on the other hand, to endeavour to calm his sorrows and sooth his affliction, to consider the wounds of adversity which pain him as received in her service, the disquietude which he feels, endured for her sake ? Is she not to give way to that petulancy or anger which appears in him ? to esteem it, not as the natural inmate of his breast, but as an importunate, intruding stranger, brought thither by misfortunes and disappointments : the greater, therefore, his sorrows are, the greater should

SERM.

VI.

SERM. should be her care to remove them; her
 VI. tenderness should encrease in proportion
 to his disquietude, her forbearance to his
 warmth, her complacency to his uneasiness: her smiles are to make amends for the frowns of the world, and her love and kindness to compensate for its hatred and ingratitude.

BUT, all those branches of conjugal duty, which are above enumerated, must proceed from that great source of happiness, true and genuine affection. Love, as I observed to you in a preceding discourse, is the active, enlivening, invigorating principle, which must set in motion the whole circle of relative duties; without this, neither child nor father, servant nor master, can acquit themselves well and faithfully, in the discharge of their duty: but, if in them it is requisite, in that which is now before us, it is indispensable: in them it must preside and direct;

direct; but in this, it must itself operate SERM.
constantly, steadily and invariably. But VI.
it often happens, that indifference holds
the place of affection; and that those,
who should be most solicitous about
each other's welfare and happiness, are
most careless of it: a state so unde-
sirable, is an emblem of that natural
sleep we so often experience, when the
soul of man is benumm'd and stupified,
when nature performs her office and
operations with heaviness and reluctance.
Instead of being surprized, therefore, that
so many are unhappy, it should rather raise
our admiration to find so few. When we
reflect on the inconsiderable number of
those who are joined by love and affec-
tion; when we consider, that half the
world are united by ambition, pride,
self-interest, force or artifice, how is it
possible they should be blest? Shall we
not rather wonder to see the chain so
durable as it is, when the links which

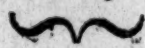
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compose

SERM. compose it are of so weak a nature?

VI. From the want of, or from the loss of affection, flow all those cares and jealousies, all those troubles and animosities, which break the bands of nuptial harmony, and poison the fountain of domestic happiness: Without this, indeed, fidelity hath no proper support to rest itself on, prudence, no end to promote, tenderness and complacency, no object to employ themselves in the service of; whereas, on the other hand, where this is, scarce any thing else can be wanted; it improves the charms of beauty where it is, and supplies the place where it is not; it commands respect and obedience from the obstinate and perverse, constancy from the most inconstant, discretion from the most indiscreet; it polishes the indelicate, softens the rude, humbles the proud and haughty; it adds, in short, to the bloom of youth, health and plenty; and gives vigour, joy and pleasure,

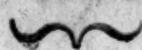
sure, even to old age, sickness and ad-
 versity. SERM.
VI.



BUT lastly :

THE good wife should be *pious*;

Religion is the great bond which links together, and unites every virtue: piety will ensure fidelity, enforce obedience, encourage prudence, increase tenderness, and double affection. When the duty to a husband is considered, as it ought to be considered, as a duty to God also, then, and then only, will it be duly and punctually performed: she, indeed, can never be a good wife, who is not a good christian. It is not to be expected, that she who pays no deference or respect to her Creator and her God, will obey her lord and husband; or that she will ever submit herself to human ordinances, who neglects the divine: whilst, on the other hand, she who is pious and religious, will at the same time that she



is making herself amiable in the sight of man, recommend herself to the favour and protection of God. If her husband is insensible of her affection, God will not be so; if he forgetteth, God will remember; if he is ungrateful, God will reward her.

To sum up all, therefore, as I did in the preceding duties, in the character of

A G O O D W I F E.

THE *good wife* then, is one, who ever mindful of the solemn contract which she hath entered into, is strictly and conscientiously virtuous, constant, and faithful to her husband; chaste, pure, and unblemished in every thought, word and deed: she is humble and modest from reason and conviction, submissive from choice, and obedient from inclination: what she acquires by love and tenderness, she preserves by prudence and

and discretion: she makes it her business to serve, and her pleasure to oblige her husband; as conscious, that every thing which promotes his happiness, must in the end, contribute to her own: her tenderness relieves his cares, her affections softens his distress, her good humour and complacency lessen and subdue his afflictions: *she openeth her mouth, as Solomon says, with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness: she looketh well to the ways of her husband, and eateth not the bread of idleness: her children rise up and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her.* Lastly, as a good and pious christian, she looks up with an eye of gratitude to the great dispenser and disposer of all things, to the husband of the widow, and father of the fatherless, intreating his divine favour and assistance in this and every other moral and religious duty; well satisfied, that if she duly and punctually discharges her several offices

SERM.

VI.

SERM. offices and relations in this life, she shall
VI. be blessed and rewarded for it in
another.

TO CONCLUDE, therefore, in the words of Solomon, addressed to the good and virtuous wife: *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.*

Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

Now to God the Father, &c.

T H E

THE
D U T Y
O F
H U S B A N D S.
T O
W I V E S.



S E R M O N VII.

D U T Y T O W I V E S.

E P H E S. V. 33.

*Let every one of you love his wife even
as himself.*

THE gracious providence of God, SERM.
which is always anxious for our VII.
welfare, and solicitous for our
preservation, hath ordained that all
those ties and relations in human life,
which constitute part of our duty,
should likewise tend to our interest and
happiness; and that the same love and
affection, which make us agreeable to
each other, should, at the same time,
render us amiable in the sight of God:

X

and

SERM. and amongst these there is not perhaps
VII. any which seems to demand our grati-
tude in a stronger manner, than that
rational and intimate connection which
is now before us ; the connection of man
and wife : an institution, which so visibly
carries with it the mark of divine ap-
probation, and is dignified by the
sanction of the most high. It is indeed
amongst those privileges which seem
most peculiarly to distinguish man from
the inferior parts of the creation :
whilst brutes indulge themselves in the
unrestrained freedom of sensual appe-
tite, and satisfy their lusts and desires
without delicacy or distinction, man
makes use of his reason to direct his
choice, to fix it on some favourite indi-
vidual, there to confine all his cares,
and center all his affection, *and they two,*
as the scripture expresseth it, *become*
one flesh.

HAVING

HAVING already therefore treated on the duty of wives to husbands, I proceed now to consider that reciprocal love, regard, and esteem, which are due from the husband to the wife.

Let every one of you, says the apostle, so love his wife even as himself.

UNDER the general term of love, we may, I think comprehend the following necessary and essential branches of this important duty; namely, regard and affection, constancy and fidelity, tenderness and delicacy, prudence and discretion, good-nature and indulgence, care and protection, industry and sobriety, piety and virtue.

LOVE, as I took occasion to observe to you, is the great corner stone, on which must always be raised the foundation of domestic happiness; to form

SERM. VII.  this attachment therefore, it is first and above all things necessary, that a partial affection be contracted towards the person; and as this must depend in a great measure on external appearance, the gracious providence of God hath so ordained, that the opinions and tastes of men, with regard to outward forms, should be as various as the forms themselves; what strikes one with the idea of beauty may shock another by an appearance of deformity: thus doth imagination in this case supply the place of truth and reason, and even the deception of our senses contribute to the enjoyment of them. The same beneficent power, which produced order out of chaos, and which commands the jarring elements to bring forth harmony, hath also from the various inclinations of different minds, and the wayward decisions of arbitrary fancy, contrived to promote the general and universal happiness.

IT

It must be confessed, that, in the choice of many, too great a regard is paid to external appearances ; the lustre of beauty is apt to dazzle, and the sprightliness of wit is apt to betray ; men for the most part are such poor architects as to build the structure of domestic happiness on a very weak and tottering foundation, when the pillars which are to support it must of course moulder and decay ; it is a house built upon the sand, the waves of jealousy and anger break in upon it, the storms of sickness and of age beat upon that house, and it falls. Lasting materials should doubtless be sought for, where lasting happiness is proposed ; qualities and perfections, not glaring but useful, not shining but solid, such as are calculated not merely to adorn and beautify, but to strengthen and enrich the edifice.

A PARTIAL

SERM.

VII.

A PARTIAL and strong attachment therefore to the form and manners, an affectionate esteem of the qualities and disposition of the woman is absolutely and indispensibly necessary to conjugal felicity : both parties, therefore, I cannot but think, have in this point an indisputable right to judge for themselves, and where they do not, we find by constant experience, there is no lasting felicity ; nothing indeed can be more unreasonable than the arbitrary commands and interposition of parental authority in this respect ; *those whom God hath joined let no man put asunder*, and the command when revers'd is perhaps equally binding, *those whom God hath put asunder let no man join* ; let none pretend to unite those whom different passions, sentiments, tempers, and inclinations seem, by nature designed to separate from each other.

FROM

FROM this partial affection to the SERM.
person proceeds, and from that alone VII.
can proceed, the next great and essential
virtue in the husband, fidelity: the
want of this doth indeed naturally
disunite the bonds of wedlock, and
utterly incapacitate both from the least
enjoyment of mutual happiness, and
yet how many amongst us are unpar-
donably careless and guilty in this im-
portant article!

INFIDELITY on the part of the
husband is indeed grown so universal,
that its opposite virtue is almost out of
countenance; it is treated as venial by
one sex, and submitted to as unavoid-
able by the other; the world is so com-
plaisant as to stile it gallantry, and
because it is known to be fashionable,
it is not condemned as unlawful: thus
vice is palliated with the name of error,
and that which is in reality the highest
disgrace to our nature, is considered as
an

SERM. an ornament of it. Custom hath, I know
 VII. not how, given a kind of sanction to it
 ~~~~~ on one side, and at the same time con-  
 demned it on the other; as if God  
 had, like man, made his laws with  
 partiality and injustice, and that the  
 seventh commandment were enjoined  
 only against the weaker vessel; but let  
 those who thus miserably deceive them-  
 selves remember, that the same solemn  
 contract hath engaged both: that if  
 they neglect the obligation, and spurn  
 at the command, it is not the injured  
 wife alone who will resent the infringe-  
 ment of it: good men will consider it  
 as an outrage against virtue here; and  
 God will assuredly punish it as such  
 hereafter.

BUT to affection and fidelity, the  
 good husband must also add tenderness  
 and delicacy. It is the good-nature and  
 complacency of the host, which makes  
 the pleasure of the <sup>banquet</sup> conquest; and in the  
 manner

manner of conferring a favour, there is almost as much merit as in the bestowing it. SERM.  
VII.

The husband, therefore, is to consider not how much, but to whom he gives; not what he speaks only, but to whom it is spoken: in his behaviour to his wife, the heart must seem to follow the hand, and the mind to direct the tongue; he should suit that delicacy which he would oblige, and imitate that elegance which he would please. To a wife, mere civility is coldness, and, mere complaisance is indifference; to her a more expressive kindness should add a grace to every word, and a peculiar tenderness diffuse itself over every action. It is, indeed, this behaviour alone, which can soften and temper the rudeness of masculine severity, and give a polish to the rougher manners of one half of mankind; it is this tender commerce, and this delicate connection, which throws a lustre over the conversation of the ci-

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vilized



SERM. vilized world, and constitutes in a great  
VI.I measure, the most elegant and refined  
pleasures of human life.

BUT further :

To love, fidelity and tenderness, the husband must likewise add, prudence and discretion.

HALF the miseries and disquietudes, half the interruptions of conjugal peace and domestic felicity arise from desires too ardent, and hopes too sanguine; both parties, at their first entrance into the nuptial state, especially in youth, are apt to form to themselves ideas, very inadequate and disproportioned to the condition of human life; to entertain delusive notions of a romantic and visionary paradise, where the earth is cloathed with perpetual verdure, the flowers never fade, and the fruits are immortal; but when, instead of this,  
they

they begin, perhaps in a short time, to SERM.  
feel the thorns springing up under their VII.  
feet, when they perceive the fruits to wither, and the verdure to decay, they are filled with unreasonable wonder and astonishment; they had accustomed themselves to look for nothing less than uninterrupted health, constant success, invariable harmony and affection: they suffer, therefore, not so much from the evil which they have as from the want of that which they have not. At the beginning of the voyage, the sky is generally clear, the waters calm and unruffled; but, to conclude from thence, that we are to sail through life, without storm or tempest, is, to the last degree, absurd and unreasonable. It is the duty and the interest of both therefore, and especially of him who sits at the helm, to prepare against the worst, to steer the vessel with all possible care and diligence, and conduct it safely into the harbour of peace and felicity.



SERM.

VII.

PROCEED we then to another necessary branch of the husband's duty, good-nature and indulgence. In a world so full of miseries and misfortunes, errors and inadvertencies, passions and follies, differences both in opinion and practice must arise, where the connection is close and intimate; mutual complacency and forbearance, therefore, are absolutely and indispensably necessary in the married state; power is never so amiable, as when cloathed with meekness and humility; and the superiority of our own understanding will be always most evident, when it condescends to forgive or to relieve the weakness of another. When women offend, therefore, they are to be considered as women; as beings whose power and faculties are not so extensive, whose judgment and reason are not so strong and solid as our own; whose experience is confined with-  
in

in a much narrower circle; whose un-  
derstandings are limited and enfeebled  
by education; who are liable therefore,  
with the greater ease to be seduced or  
imposed on; not sufficiently aware of  
arts which they are themselves igno-  
rant of; nor upon their guard against  
that guilt, which they never practice.

SERM.  
VII.  
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VANITY and extravagance are the
stale and trite excuses for cruelty, in-
constancy, and inhumanity in the worst
of husbands; and yet, certain it is, that
he who is the cause ought not to mur-
mur at the effect; and he who makes
his own misery, hath no right to com-
plain of it: what shall we say, if the
weeds, which thus overrun the garden,
are planted there and cultivated too by
our own hands? Flattery, too lavishly
bestowed, will naturally produce that
pride which is thus condemned; and
that pride enflamed and encouraged
will

SERM. will as naturally beget luxury and extravagance; is it not most absurd then
VII. to be surpris'd that the idol expects worship, when men have taken so much pains to raise it; or that when they have been at such expence to feed a vice, they should be astonish'd at the size and the increase of it?

IF the husband is already possess'd of love, fidelity, tenderness, prudence, and good-nature, he will always remember that most essential part of his duty to his wife, which consists in the care and protection of her, in providing for and maintaining her, as well as his situation, rank, and circumstances in life will permit.

THE superior strength, power, and capacities of one sex, as I have before observ'd to you, were originally design'd to protect and preserve the other: woman is left by nature, weak and defenceless,

fenceless, unable to struggle with the troubles and difficulties, or contend with the fraud and malice of an ill-natured and designing world : on man, who is more able, she must rely for aid and support ; this aid and support, this necessary care and assistance, the husband is bound constantly to afford her : he receives her, for the most part, from the hands of those, under whose wing she had till that time been safe and happy ; from those whose goodness he promiseth to supply, and whose indulgence he hath sworn to imitate : he snatches her from the bosom of parental tenderness to feed and cherish her in his own : as he hath taken her therefore from one protection, it is incumbent on him to provide her with another : to give her, without selfishness or reluctance, as her indisputable right, a share of all that he hath, of all the good things which God hath pleased to bestow upon him ; she hath

SERM.
VII.

SERM. hath an undoubted claim to all his joys
VI. and pleasures, and he hath no right to
withhold any thing from her, but his
sorrows and misfortunes.

WITHOUT some degree of sobriety, vigilance, and assiduity, a man cannot provide the necessaries and conveniences of life for himself; and the difficulty will of course increase, in proportion to the number of those he is to take care of: diligence and frugality therefore are in a husband, qualities essentially necessary; because the welfare and happiness of the whole family depends upon him: if he falls, he falls like Sampson, and drags after him the ruins of the whole building.

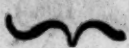
BUT, true love and affection is not confined within the narrow bounds of our own existence; it extends itself to future times, and lives, as it were, beyond the grave. The good husband therefore, will

will think himself bound, not only to ^{SERM.} provide for and maintain the wife of his ^{VII.} bosom whilst she remains there, but also when he is separated from her; not only during his own life, but her's also: he will endeavour to reserve, if possible, such a provision for her future support, comfort and satisfaction, as may make her less sensible of his loss, but more so of his unalterable regard and affection for her.

THE widow and the fatherless do, surely of all, most deserve relief and commiseration, and though they sometimes may, yet it is but too certain they do not always meet with it; what is the business of one, is generally neglected by all; men have connections of their own which demand their attention; it is no wonder therefore, that the cries of the widow are not heard, nor her tears regarded: because, the very same reason which made one so careful of and so anxious for her whilst he lived, is the

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very

SERM. VII.  very reason why so many neglect her when he is no more: her circumstance at the best, is the lot of anguish and disquietude: with all that the husband can do, she must be wretched; and the least he can do, is to take care that she shall not be destitute. The provision should be proportioned, moreover, to her situation in life; the better she always hath lived, the better he should take care she always should live: the longer she hath been used to affluence and plenty, the less, no doubt, will she be able to struggle with penury and want: her present happiness, where no provision is made, can only contribute to her future misery; and the joys which are past, will embitter the sorrows that are to come. This, therefore, is a duty which love will always dictate, and gratitude inspire. It may be said, indeed, by the law and selfish, that where we do not receive, we are not obliged to pay; that death cancels this and every other

other bond ; but surely, to the noble SERM.
VII.
and disinterested mind, there is a pleasure in promoting other's happiness, even when it is no longer conducive to our own : and it is always more generous to bestow a favour where we can never expect a return for it.

But if frugality, industry, and sobriety are requisite in a husband, so also above all are piety and virtue.

WOMEN are generally respected and esteemed in the world, according to the merit and character of their husbands : for her sake therefore, as well as for his own, he should be more than ordinarily careful to preserve his reputation unspotted, and to maintain his honour and integrity inviolable : the world may be ill-natured enough to impute his errors to her advice, and his defects to her example : if he is careless, she will be reproached ; if he is vicious, she will be

SERM. condemned; his follies will make her
VII. contemptible, and his vices render her
unhappy. Thus, the innocence of the
one may suffer for the guilt of the other;
and those who have not committed the
crime be involved in the punishment of
it. If the husband loves his wife there-
fore, he will be virtuous and good, that
she may be honoured and respected: if
he loves his wife, he will be pious and
religious, that he may make her pious
and religious also. And to this end, it
is highly necessary, though it is not al-
ways attended to, that husband and wife
be as much united as possible, with re-
gard to their religious sentiments; that
*they walk together in the house of God as
friends.* Difference of opinion in this
important point will naturally create
and draw along with it difference in
others; and doubtless, where happiness
is to depend on union and harmony,
we should be careful to remove every
possible cause of dissention.

To

To sum up all therefore, in the character of

A GOOD HUSBAND.

THE *good husband* is one, who, wedded not by interest but by choice, is constant as well from inclination as from principle: he treats his wife with delicacy as a woman, with tenderness as a friend: he attributes her follies to her weakness, her imprudence to her inadvertency; he passes them over therefore with good-nature, and pardons them with indulgence: all his care and industry are employed for her welfare; all his strength and power are exerted for her support and protection; he is more anxious to preserve his own character and reputation, because her's is blended with it: lastly, the good husband is pious and religious, that he may animate her faith by his practice, and enforce

SERM. VII. enforce the precepts of christianity by his own example: that, as they join to promote each other's happiness in this world, they may unite to insure eternal joy and felicity in that which is to come.

TO CONCLUDE.

I HAVE endeavoured in this and the preceding discourses, to illustrate and explain what are generally termed, the RELATIVE DUTIES: a matter of the utmost consequence to society, as on the punctual discharge of them, the felicity of all mankind, doth in a great measure depend. If they were universally, regularly, and faithfully performed, the world would no longer be a scene of vice, misery and confusion, but a delicious paradise, the seat of joy and happiness, and no imperfect emblem of that blessed state, which the good and virtuous will not fail to inherit hereafter.

You

You will easily perceive, my brethren, that I have purposely avoided entering into those minuter parts of every duty which must depend on the various ranks, circumstances and conditions of human life; I have only sketch'd as it were, the outlines, which must be filled up and finished by your own sense and observation.

In the mean time, let us put up our prayers to the supreme dispenser of every good gift, that he will assist us in the performance of these moral and religious duties; that he will inspire our hearts with that love and benevolence, that care and industry, that zeal and assiduity which are necessary in the discharge of them; that children and parents, servants and masters, wives and husbands, may all punctually and regularly perform the task appointed for them

SERM. them, which alone can promote their
VII. ease, satisfaction, and happiness here,
~~~~~ and secure eternal joy and felicity here-  
after.

Now to God the Father, &c.

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